

FOR ALL MEN!!

Bluebook

ADVENTURE IN FACT AND FICTION

25c
MARCH

**BIG BONUS
FICTION
ROUND-UP!**

 *plus* 

**The Most Hated Man
In Basketball**

.....

**THE NATURAL
INFERIORITY
OF WOMEN**

**BEWARE
THE INCOME TAX
 GYPS!**

Stories by Frank O'Rourke,
Octavus Roy Cohen, H. Allen
Smith, John Rhodes Sturdy,
Nelson Bond, Henry La Cossitt



Who wrote what
in this month's
Bluebook

Purely Personal

When we bought "A Time of Evil" (Pages 18-31), the name of the author, Robert Martin, frankly meant nothing to us, and we went around patting ourselves on the back for having discovered a new and unknown young writer, the first (to our limited knowledge) creator



of a private eye who also talked and acted like a normal human being. We must encourage this Martin, we said. Then the gentleman sent in his biography.

And here's our "unknown writer:"

He has been writing professionally for 15 years; he has sold more than a hundred short stories, novelettes and articles, and he also has written four successful mystery novels. One of the latter, "Little Sister," has sold more than 500,000 copies in the United States and Canada alone, plus having been published abroad. Another, "Dark Dream," has been published in England, France and Italy. And a third, "Sleep, My Love," will be reprinted by Dell on April 1st.

Not bad for an unknown, eh? Of course, we can claim a slight defense at not having recognized Martin as the author of "Little Sister"—he wrote it under the pseudonym of Lee Roberts.

Bob, who did all the above in his spare time—he's personnel manager for an industrial firm in Cleveland—lives on the outskirts of the Ohio city with his wife and three children. He's 45, a native Virginian, and comes equipped with a built-in brother who's a doctor

and who helps out with the ticklish medical problems that face every author of a whodunit. And since Bob prefers writing mysteries—in which the *why* is more important than the *who* or *how*—to any other form of creative work, he's in a good spot with that brother. All mystery writers should be so lucky.

* * *

Anyone who has to be introduced to Octavus Roy Cohen, author of "Report from the Dean" (Pages 41-47), must have done all his reading in Sanskrit these past 25 years—alho chances are Roy's had some of his stuff in that lingo, too.

Anyway, this gentleman *only* has written an average of one novel a year since he began to do the thing seriously some 38 years ago, and, in addition, has turned out some 31 motion pictures, a half-dozen plays, and countless radio scripts.

He lives now in Los Angeles, although he comes from South Carolina, and if you still don't recognize him, it may help to know he's the creator of the fabulous Florian Slappey.

Okay?

* * *

The author of "Who's On First?" (Pages 32-35) is Roy Moriarty, who wouldn't care if he never saw another baseball game, and whose essay shows it. As his composition further points out,

he would just as soon never read about another baseball game in his favorite newspaper.

"I am convinced," he says, "that if the newspapers stopped publishing baseball news, the whole game would collapse, and you'd have no more fans than there are for Scrabble tournaments."

He intimated that this would be all right with him.

* * *

"Midge McCall, Indian Fighter," (Pages 76-80) represents another appearance in *Bluebook* for Jim Lynch, who will be remembered for "The Blue Water Clan" which ran in our issue of June, 1952. But, in a way, "Midge" is something of a departure for Jim, who ordinarily keeps his fiction pretty close to his one true love, the water.

This dates back to his boyhood on the banks of the Illinois River, where he first got the seagoing wanderlust and attempted to build a raft which would float him, at the age of 10, down to the Gulf of Mexico. He was stopped by a group known as parents.

Since then, Jim's grown up, and he now lives in Inglewood, Calif., where his dreams have come true. He has sailed in several Newport-to-Ensenada races, being declared a winner in his class in one of them, and he has great hopes for the future.

The California-to-Hawaii race? Well, why not? It's no tougher than the Illinois River to a ten-year-old.



Jim Lynch

Bluebook

ADVENTURE IN FACT AND FICTION

March, 1954

MAGAZINE

Vol. 98, No. 5

Trademark Reg. U.S. Pat. Off.

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The short stories and novel herein are fiction and intended as such. They do not refer to real characters or actual events. If the name of any living person is used, it is a coincidence.

BLUEBOOK MAGAZINE is published each month simultaneously in the United States and Canada by McCall Corporation, Marvin Pierce, President; Lowell Shumway, Vice-President and Circulation Director; Edward M. Brown, Secretary; William C. Asar, Treasurer. Publication and Subscription Office: McCall Street, Dayton 1, Ohio. Executive and Editorial Office: 399 Park Ave. New York 17, N. Y. MANUSCRIPTS and ART MATERIAL will be carefully considered but will be received only with the understanding that the publisher and editor shall not be responsible for loss of injury. SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION: \$2.50 for one year, \$4.00 for two years, \$6.00 for three years in U. S., Canada and Pan-American countries (add \$1.00 per year for other countries). Send all remittances and correspondence about subscriptions to our publication office: McCall Street, Dayton 1, Ohio. IF YOU PLAN TO MOVE SOON please notify us four weeks in advance. Subscription lists are addressed in advance of publication date and extra postage is charged for forwarding. On sending notice of change of address give old address as well as new, preferably clipping name and old address from last copy received. MARCH 1954, VOL. LXXXVIII, No. 5. Copyright 1954 by McCall Corporation. Reproduction in any manner in whole or part in English or other languages prohibited. All rights reserved throughout the world. Necessary formalities, including deposits where required, effected in the United States of America, Canada, and Great Britain. Protection secured under the International and Pan-American copyright conventions. Reprinting not permitted except by special authorization. Printed in U.S.A. Entered as second-class matter November 12, 1920, at the Post Office at Dayton, Ohio, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

PRO and CON

Address all letters to: THE EDITOR, Bluebook Magazine, 230 Park Avenue, New York 17, N. Y. All letters must be signed. None can be acknowledged or returned.

For the Birds

To the Editor:

In the past ten years, American magazines have produced a number of poor articles about falconry, but the one which you have published ("Want a Killer for a Pet?"—Nov.) is by far the worst and most degrading to the sport that has yet appeared.

At best, falconry in America is in a very delicate situation because of a great deal of uncritical and misguided propaganda both for and against it. The Falconry Club of America has about two hundred members who would like to see the sport established on an acceptable basis in the United States and Canada, and sensationalism of the sort produced by Mr. Monroe does not help the situation. The least he could have done would have been to consult a few competent falconers first and to read a couple of good books on the subject, and the least you could have done

as editors would have been to check the accuracy of his "factual" statements. . . .

Los Angeles, Calif.

Tom J. Cade

"The Goshawk," by T. H. White, and "Hawks in the Hand," by Frank & John Craighead, were only two of the many books Mr. Monroe has read and which he used as reference. He also interviewed and talked with many expert falconers. As for "degrading" the sport, Mr. Monroe and Bluebook have received so many letters from readers who became interested in falconry as a result of the article that we have been unable, because of the time and expense involved, to answer all of them.—Ed.

. . . A little knowledge is a dangerous thing—in this case for the good of falconry.

Chicago, Ill.

F. N. Childs

To the Editor:

. . . I am enclosing two addresses which the beginners (in falconry) may want to have in case they want to know more about this fine sport.

For a fine list of books on the subject of falconry, write to W. R. Hecht, 3965A Shenandoah Ave., St. Louis, Mo. L. N. Wight, Bolsters Mills, Maine, can supply the hood, lure, etc.

Yours was a fine outline on the sport, and the fact that editors still choose to publish stories about falconry is proof the sport is far from dead.

Ft. Bliss, Tex.

Richard L. King

Thanks to Mr. King for those addresses, which many readers have requested.—Ed.

Murder, He Says

To the Editor:

I seethed, I fumed, I cursed (notwithstanding the author's instructions to watch my blood pressure) while reading Lester David's excellent account entitled "Murder Allowed Here" (December). True, there are no teeth in the laws governing vehicular homicide. But what we need in our laws are not merely teeth but fangs—sharp, ugly, stinging fangs which, when they begin to bite, will literally kill the murderer behind the wheel, via the electric chair or gas chamber.

Unfortunately, nature endowed me with a somewhat quick temper, but also with enough intellect to conclude that a quick temper is not a good requisite for a driver's license. In all my 27 years, I haven't driven a car once, and I haven't the remotest intention of ever doing so. Additionally, I despise alcoholic beverages and the evils associated with them. Hence, my conscience doesn't permit me to share the cheap, mawkish sentimentality and compassion exhibited by jurors toward the "nice enough sort of chap" who "doesn't look like a murderer."

Kevin O'Malley
Washington, D. C.

Ham Greene

To the Editor:

While serving in Korea in December of 1950, and through November of 1951, I had the opportunity to meet Bluebook's foreign correspondent, Hamilton Greene. We met, though not formally, during the action on Hill 717, in July, 1951 (see "Hill 717," Bluebook, July, 1952).

Mr. Greene astounded me with the bravery he displayed at that time. His bravery, as it was with all of us, was the kind possessed only by those who stare death in the face while doing a job no one else can do.



During the action on Hill 717, Mr. Greene took numerous photographs, one of myself carrying grenades to the crest of 717 in my fatigue jacket. I still break out in a cold sweat when I think of what might have happened if I had been hit. . . .

Do remember me to Mr. Greene when you see him. . . .

Eugene Owen

Lincoln, Neb.

Newshawk

To the Editor:

Congratulations! As one who was dipped in printer's ink at the age of 12, and whose first newspaper job was proofreading classified ads, I read with great interest the first of your series of enlightening articles about newspapermen ("So You Want to be a Newspaperman," December *Bluebook*). It was excellent.

I'm a *Bluebook* "cover-to-cover" man, and I shall be waiting impatiently (as usual) for your next great issue.

Lt. Harry Hughey, USAF

San Antonio, Tex.

Lt. Hughey was representative of many present and former newspapermen who wrote congratulating Bluebook on Will Oursler's grand definitive article.—Ed.

Just Between Friends

To the Editor:

I have been reading *Bluebook* for a number of years now, and I think quite highly of it.

But why start spoiling it by printing such trash as in the November issue ("Just Between Friends," by Duane Yarnell). Such things as Mr. Yarnell describes just don't happen, not even in the movies. A lot of my friends think it was a very poor story.

Sidney Commandant

St. Johns, Nfld.

Why not change your friends, Sid.—Ed.

No Whammie

To the Editor:

Bluebook isn't a two-bit magazine here in Alaska; it costs thirty cents on the newsstand. But, even if it cost fifty cents, I'd still be there to get the next issue.

I don't call myself a literary critic, in any sense of the word, but I read *Bluebook* from cover to cover, and I LIKE it.

Harry Wham

Anchorage, Alaska.

MARCH, 1954

Fine Fellow

To the Editor:

Having been a reader of *Bluebook* since way back when, I feel justified in handing out a few bouquets.

Lately, since you've gotten rid of those damn fool religions and other such tripe you use to run a few years ago, your magazine has improved one hundred percent. Some of the finest fiction and articles I've ever had the pleasure of reading!

Keep up the good work.

Dick Gaskill

Seattle, Wash.

Same Here

To the Editor:

Mere words do not express my feelings when I opened my November *Bluebook* to find ADVERTISING!! Here the magazine which I had repeatedly recommended to my friends as one of the best men's mags, plus one of the few having no ads, had stabbed me in the back.

On further observation, however, I found only one of my precious inside pages sacrificed to the god of financial return, and, after examining my December copy carefully, found but one ad. So the picture seems not so gloomy now. . . .

On the subject of the changes in *Bluebook*, I'm comparatively a new reader (only three years regular attendance), but I sincerely believe it is better for the change. All that's been done is to keep *Bluebook* among the best and ahead of the rest.

I am continually surprised, though,

that you bother to print those letters of protest you get. About all that can be said for them is that they do serve to stir the loyal readers (who must be in the thousands) to write and let you know how much they appreciate your efforts.

Fred Dunn

Wichita, Kans.

Nothing wrong with that, is there, Fred?—Ed.

Bargain Hunter

To the Editor:

Why do you listen to these characters who constantly criticize everything you do in *Bluebook*? The hell with them, I say; if they don't like what you're doing, why don't they buy some other magazine and pipe down?

You want to know why they don't? Because there is no other magazine or book that gives a reader as much sheer enjoyment as *Bluebook* does for the money.

I used to buy an occasional paperbacked mystery or adventure novel, and I paid 25 cents for it. Then I got smart. Why, I asked myself, should I pay two-bits for them, when I can get a better novel in *Bluebook*, a story that's five times better written, plus any number of short stories, articles, cartoons and other features—all for the same twenty-five cents!

Tell those complainers to get lost. Ed Lucas

Youngstown, Ohio.

Complainers! Get lost.—Ed.



"Maybe next time you won't park so close to a hydrant."



Thinking Out Loud



It's not that we're against women. We like the little darlings probably as much as, and maybe more than, the next man, who is married and has three kids. But, of late, the girls seem to be getting a bit snappish, and to be rushing into print all over the place with essays attempting to prove that the female is the superior sex and men are just fatheads you keep around to empty the ashes, shovel the walks, and bring home the pay check. Especially to bring home that pay check.

The latest to take this stand is a Miss Inez Robb, who does a daily squib for the Scripps-Howard newspapers and who appears to feel that males can be eliminated any time now, or as soon as someone finds a reasonable facsimile. As veteran *Bluebook* readers must know by now, this is a philosophy we oppose in toto as well as in other sections of the country.

Admittedly, Miss Robb has a gimmick here. You want to get a lot of people reading you regularly, the thing to do is take a swing at large blocks of same. They'll read you then just to find out what new insults you have to toss at them. Unfortunately for Miss Robb, in the case of at least one reader, this didn't work; the latter conned Miss Robb's initial blast against man, and went off to the pool hall to cross her name off the eligible list.

The reason is simple: Miss Robb just doesn't know what the hell she's talking about, and we can prove it. Indeed, we do prove it, right in this issue, beginning on pages 6-7.

As you will note, the author of our rebuttal, Les David, doesn't just sit back and theorize, in fancy words, over his thesis; he has gone out and gathered the facts. Need one do more?

By-by, Inez.

When you get finished chuckling over the dissection of the feminists, it may be that you will want a few more laughs; and, this being the case, we direct your attention to a monograph on pages 32-35 by Roy Moriarty. As you will note, this is this year's baseball news, written in advance for the fan who can't wait until next October.

One thing, though, that Mr. Moriarty states, with some conviction, will happen during the year is that Louis Norman (Bobo) Newsom will pitch at various times in season for all the teams in the majors. And, since this conflicted some-

what with an AP dispatch from Orlando, Fla., dated last November 23, to the effect that Mr. Newsom had retired from baseball, after 26 years in the game, we summoned Brother Moriarty front-and-center for an explanation.

"Oh, that!" said Roy-boy. "Don't pay any attention to that. Bobo's been retiring annually since right after I entered kindergarten. He'll be back. In fact, I'll bet you right now that Bobo's on a train somewhere, his glove shoved in his hip-pocket, as he heads for a baseball camp and another year of fogging them in. After all," Moriarty wound up,

"why should the guy retire? He's only 46."

Sounds plausible.

Anyone alive who remembers a story we ran back in May, 1952, called "No Strings Attached"? This was a jimdandy by Alan Nelson about an old man who saved string, and, in the story, he had so much string wound into a ball that his collection was as big and round as a bathysphere, big enough, in fact, for a grown man to be wrapped up inside it.

Anyway, a couple of readers—the usual malcontents—bollered that no one could have that much string around the place, and just what kind of a deal were we trying to hand them?

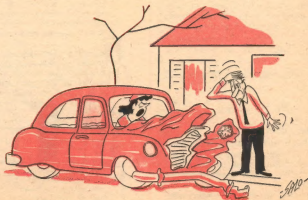
Well, sir, comes an item from Columbus, Kans., about Ed Fouts and his hobby, which just happens to be collecting old string. Ed's been doing it for a mere twelve years, and he now has enough wound into a ball to make a sphere that measures eleven feet eight inches at the equator, and which weighs 660 pounds.

According to this latter yarn (no pun intended), Ed keeps his ball of string out back. That's ever since he had to knock a window out of the service station he used to operate, to enable him to get his hobby outdoors.

As we've said before, you read it in *Bluebook*, and it's bound to have happened somewhere. If it hasn't happened, just stick around and hold tight. It will.

Just before he died, a little more

...AND YOU CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT 'EM



"Oh, stop complaining. The car couldn't go forever without getting a scratch!"

than a year ago, Joe Palmer, racing expert for the *New York Herald Tribune*, was meditating over some pieces he planned to do for *Bluebook*, although they weren't exactly going to be pieces on horse racing. Actually, he was hoping to do a yarn for us on some of the potables served around a place called Louisville, Kentucky, in the time of the Kentucky Derby.

It was a sad blow to many when Joe died suddenly, in the very shank of his life. And, though we aren't given in this space to plugging works other than those of our own writers, we felt you'd be happy to know that a few of Joe's more sparkling compositions have been bound into a book called "This Was Racing." You could do worse than buy a copy for these dreary spring evenings.

More than anything, you might get the book to read Joe's instructions for making jellied martinis. And, come to dwell on it, you got a better recipe?

* * *

In one more plug for the contents of this issue, let's all take a look at the novelette (pages 18-31), which was written by Robert Martin.

Now, admittedly, this is another private-eye yarn, something we've all seen about as much of as we care to, for the nonce. However, there is one difference between Mr. Martin's creation and the other representatives of the genre: Mr. Martin's story is the first one concerning a private eye—at least that we've read—which (a) has no sex, (b) no wise-cracks, and (c) some intelligent, workaday detective work. In other words, a good detective story involving normal people.

It's something you won't see every day.

* * *

Ring down the curtain, you might want to amuse the boys down at the pool, hall with a line we frankly stole from the posthumously-published autobiography of Walter C. Kelly, who was known in vaudeville as "The Virginia Judge."

Seems Mr. Kelly found himself one weekend in a southern town, playing a date at the local theater. After the last show, there was this party and that, and Mr. Kelly found himself getting to bed fairly close to sunrise. He wasn't awakened again for at least another two hours.

It was a bellhop. He had a telegram, he said, and would Mr. Kelly please wake up and accept same.

Mad clear through, Mr. Kelly frothed, "Slide it under the door, will you!"

There was a pause. Then, "Ah can't, sub—I've got it on a plate."

End of joke.

MAXWELL HAMILTON

What Next!

PERSISTENCE . . . In Montreal, police reported the most determined suicide attempt on record. A man hit himself on the head with a hammer, drank poison, jumped from a second-story window and lived to talk about it.

FALSE ALARM . . . In Sparta, Mich., parents who run outside to see if it is their children who are in trouble often find nothing but a talking crow shouting, "Mama, come and get me."

FISH STORY . . . In East Aurora, N. Y., Austin Bennett felt a strike while fishing and began to reel in his line, felt another strike, much heavier, and pulled harder, discovered he had caught both a 16-pound northern pike and a 3-pound bass—still alive—which the pike had swallowed.

DANGEROUS HOMECOMING . . . In Wichita, Kan., William J. Pio, ex-combat infantryman in the South Pacific during World War II and a survivor of an earthquake and a tidal wave during post-war occupation in Japan plus more action in Korea and the crash of a B-36, was sent to the hospital with blood poisoning after he returned to the U. S. and cut his finger on a cocklebur.

THANKSGIVING . . . In Springfield, Mo., a monkey which escaped from a variety store ate a \$75 meal consisting of one redheaded parrot, several parakeets, a canary and two bananas.

GLITTER . . . In St. Louis, cabdriver Joseph Koser found a "cheap trinket" in his cab, gave it to his wife who wore it while doing housework, discovered later it was a platinum and diamond bracelet worth \$10,000.

AGE . . . In Knoxville, Tenn., a 17-year-old youth married a 45-year-old grandmother who has a son two years older than her new husband.

CLIPPING . . . In Uniontown, Pa., county detectives reported that a group of teenagers collected \$1,500 for a single mowing of the lawn of an absent-minded widow by sending her regular bills, which she paid, and by regularly removing \$35 from her purse when she collected rent from a tenant.

IDEALIST . . . In Oakland, Calif., when burglars got \$8500 from Mike Shean's home recently after getting \$3500 in 1945 and \$3500 in 1944, he ran an ad in the newspapers stating he was going to be more careful with his money in the future and burglars could stay away, next day received a phone call from a man who identified himself as an old friend named Turner who had read about his loss and wanted to help him out by letting him in on a foolproof system for beating the horses. Mike sent \$200, then \$100, \$200, \$300, then received a call to send more money, this time to Turner in Miami, Florida. Mike Shean finally went to the police for help in being careful with his money.

SQUEEZE . . . In Rushville, Ind., police searched for three slippery characters who escaped from jail by squeezing through an opening that measured 15 by 7½ inches, described one of the men as weighing 160 pounds and another as "plump," said they had lubricated the bars with soap and hair oil.

WELL DRESSED . . . In Calgary, Alta., police arrested a woman for shoplifting, in her clothing found 9 slips, 10 nylon blouses, 2 dresses, 2 flashlights, and a fully-inflated volleyball.

The Natural Inferiority Of Women

Let's stop all this nonsense that women are superior to men! They aren't—and here are the facts and figures to prove it!



By LESTER DAVID



Ever since we gave women the vote, the gals have been having a field day "proving" they are the greatest things on earth, bar none, and especially barring men. Women have come up with "evidence" pretending to prove they are smarter than men, more decisive, more emotionally stable, better suited to modern living, more honest and better in every other department from fewer ulcers to more hair on top of their silly little heads. Therefore, these professional feminists triumphantly proclaim, they deserve to be freed from the shackles of housework and child-bearing, and they deserve to be given the best jobs—especially those with the most pay. Nonsense!

This is one of the greatest propaganda



hoaxes ever foisted on an unsuspecting public. Using the devious logic of women everywhere, they are convinced that anything is fair in love and war, and this is really the war to end all wars. They have developed Hitler's "Big Lie" principle to a fine art. If you scream anything long enough and loud enough, a few people are bound to believe you.

Men for the most part have chivalrously stood aside and let the gals enjoy themselves, but things have now come to the ridiculous point where these fanatical women have actually gotten their husbands believing this tripe. If you don't believe me, check the figures on the sale of kitchen appliances—better yet, look in your own kitchen. If the hundreds of dollars you've spent there isn't a polite form of blackmail—don't bother to read the rest of this. You've already lost a war you didn't even know was being fought.

Most of this myth has been created by frustrated women, of course, but some has come from a few savants who know a good publicity gimmick when they see

one and will do just about anything to get their name in the papers. One fellow, in fact, has come out with a book in which he says that women should rule the world. Gynarchy, he calls it. Malarkey, we call it.

The facts are that women are less intelligent than men, more suspicious, more obstinate, more susceptible to illusions and hallucinations, less judicious, less critical, less able to make long-range plans and almost completely lacking in the ethics that have permitted the growth of the United States. These are the facts from the record and there are plenty more of them—statistics, results of competent research specialists, carefully weighed conclusions of real experts whose primary concern is the establishment of truth and let the chips fall where they may. You'll find most of these facts buried, as I did, in learned journals and non-best sellers, couched in scientific terminology. You'll get them, as I did, from thoroughly impartial scientists who don't give a hoot for notoriety in the tabloids. And you will be struck by the thought, as I was, that the advocates of the women-are-tops school either have neglected to ferret out these facts or have conveniently overlooked them.

First, a clear-cut summary of things as they really stand. They were clearly stated by Misael Banuelos, a Spanish professor, in two recent books called "The Psychology of Femininity" and "The Psychology of Masculinity." Not many persons in this country know of these volumes, but they should. Banuelos made exhaustive investigations over a period of many years before he presented his conclusions. R. J. Corsini, reporting on them in *Psychological Abstracts*, summarizes his finds as follows:

"Woman is suspicious and, due to her inferiority, jealous. She is sensitive and susceptible to illusions and hallucinations. Women tend to evaluate men in terms of external rather than internal qualities. . . .

"Man in contrast to woman is more judicious and critical, more interested in things. Man is intense but woman is obstinate. Initiative and decision are male traits. The man is more serene and stable and impartial than the woman, who in turn is more affectionate and capable of greater compassion. Man has greater depth of conviction and greater strength of character . . . Man is more dominant, more logical, while woman is more adaptive, more intuitive and can simulate better than men. Man is a creator, he is physically superior and has greater corporal resistance than woman."

That's for summarizing the major drifts—now let's get specific.

HERE ARE THE FACTS:

Woman is suspicious,
jealous and obstinate.

Are women more intelligent than men? Innumerable studies say no and here's the latest:

A professor at Cambridge University devised a number of intelligence tests, consisting of tricky questions and problems. A psychologist, acting under auspices of the British Medical Research Council, made the rounds of a number of universities in England, testing some 700 students. And the results?

The men won, going away. Women, the psychologist reported, were especially deficient in the ability to solve problems which required reasoning power, particularly if figures were involved. Also, the expert discovered, men students were a good deal quicker to learn by practice.

Whenever points such as this come up, women are quick to argue that the intelligence tests are devised in a way to favor the male unconsciously. So a speedy rebuttal in anticipation of the allegation—the tests were created by a woman, a Dr. Alice Heim, and were administered by a woman, Kathleen Watts! What could be fairer than that?

That happened in England. Over here, Drs. Harold A. Edgerton and Stewart H. Britt of Ohio State University wanted to find out how high-school girls compare with boys in the intelligence department. They made an exhaustive analysis, accordingly, of the results of the Westinghouse Science Talent Search over a three-year period, studying the scores made by fully 15,000 boys and girls during that time. Westinghouse sponsors annual competitions among high-school seniors, awarding prizes to those who make the highest scores on examinations.

Their findings:

The number of girls who made high records in the exams, in proportion to those taking them, was *consistently lower* than the number of boys.

Studies at the University of Michigan showed similar results. When men and women of equal intelligence ratings were tested for reasoning powers, the men ranked almost 50 percent higher than women.

One of the most significant of all intelligence studies was the one conducted by Prof. Lewis M. Terman and his associates in California. Back in 1921, Professor Terman selected a group of 1,300 especially bright chil-

dren and made careful note of their progress through school.

Nine years later, he published his results. Even though the boys and girls started out even in IQs, the boys forged into the lead toward the end of their high-school years and by the ages of 17 or 18 were noticeably ahead of the girls.

Not long ago, some university psychologists tried a new approach to test the intelligence of the sexes. Figuring that a sense of humor is a good yardstick to intelligence, they told 100 carefully picked jokes to men and women at Wesleyan University and Smith College. The psychologists found that the men laughed pretty hard at most of the jokes, whether they were funny or not—but the women were more choosy.

This spoke worlds for the psychologists. Declared one writer in discussing the test: "The tendency on the part of men to laugh at anything labeled 'joke' strongly suggests that their sense of humor is less well developed and discriminating than that of women. In view of the evidence that a keen sense of humor usually goes hand in hand with high intelligence, this certainly seems to prove a point for the ladies."

But does it?

The test might have some validity if it were definitely established that one joke can be funnier, by a valid measuring rod, than another. But who's to say that one gag has 10 percent more humor content than another, or 50, or 5? Our finest comedians have frequently been utterly baffled by audience reactions to their jokes. Some which they fondly thought were side-splitting laid disconcerting eggs, while others tore down the house for no apparent reason.

It would, therefore, seem that the sense of humor tests at Smith and Wesleyan are somewhat less than scientifically sound.

Let's turn to creativeness, certainly as good an index of superiority as a sense of humor and much more readily checked.

Once a woman, Mrs. Cora Sutton Castle, pored through six huge encyclopedias page by page, tackling two American ones, two German, a British and a French. She was hunting for all women whose names were listed in three or more. When the job was completed, she had a grand total of 868 names. Commented Mrs. Castle at the conclusion of her labors:

"It is a sad commentary on the sex that from the dawn of history to the present day less than 1,000 women have accomplished anything that history has recorded as worth while."

Have a quick rundown and see:

How many women composers have there been who come within octaves of titans like Bach, Beethoven, Wagner, Mozart, Chopin, Liszt? Would you say Lena Lehmann, who composed the song cycle "In a Persian Garden"? Or Mary A. V. Gabriel, who wrote the cantata "Evangeline"? Or Louise Bertin, who composed three operas? The fact is that in the field of musical creation, the contributions of women have been the closest thing to nil compared with those of men.

How about poets and novelists? There are more women of note here than in the other categories, but even so their numbers are tiny in comparison to the male giants of letters. When you've mentioned Jane Austen, the Brontë sisters, George Eliot (Mary Ann Evans-Cross), George Sand (Mme. Dudevant), Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Emily Dickinson and Amy Lowell, you've practically exhausted the list of those on the top rung. And how many of these compare in depth, power, perception, beauty of thought and language with Shakespeare, Goethe, Dante, Milton, Keats, Shelley, Byron?

AND science. Name a woman inventor who created something more important to civilization's progress than a new diaper cover for a baby or a different type of apron. Any Edisons, Marconis, Eli Whitneys, Cyrus McCormicks, Alexander Graham Bells? Are there any women who can walk in the same platoon with Sir Isaac Newton, Charles Darwin, Louis Pasteur, Joseph Lister, Wilhelm Roentgen? Cite Mme. Curie, who helped discover radium, and Lise Meitner, who did pioneer work in nuclear physics, and you've had it.

The painful but absolutely truthful fact is simply this: There are amazingly few women who have distinguished themselves in any of the creative fields.

Hear the experts:

The famed scientist Elie Metchnikoff has declared: "Genius is a masculine quality, just as a beard is, for instance, or as strong muscles are."

Says Prof. H. M. Parshley of Smith College: "With every allowance for lack of opportunity in certain directions, it seems impossible to explain this condition except by admitting that the female is not adapted for achievement exactly like that of the male in certain fields, particularly abstract art, philosophic thought and scientific discovery."

And the famed Dr. Simon Baruch, once a professor at the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Columbia University, has stated: "The test of history has shown that women have failed to produce works of genius..."

But, goes the argument, women haven't had the opportunities granted to men. Listen to Dr. Baruch:

"Man has shown that genius makes its own opportunities. Most of the great inventors and great artists have sprung from humblest surroundings, and they have worked amid untold hardships and privations and have achieved what they had set out to achieve. Are there any great women who have risen from such surroundings and hardships to a high place?"

Speaking of achievement, let's consider this question of physical superiority. It's an unequal battle, of course, but it has to come into the picture to present the truth in its fullest light.

W. Gerald Tuttle, industrial relations director for the Consolidated Vultee Aircraft Co. of San Diego, Cal., evaluated the physical differences between men and women during the last war at a meeting of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers.

He pointed out that the average woman's body is only 35 percent muscle; with men it's 41 percent. Only 54 percent of her weight is strength, compared to 87 percent for men. Her hand can exert only a 48-pound squeeze; his an 81-pound one.

Women tire more easily for a number of reasons. Their blood, for one thing, contains up to 20 percent fewer red corpuscles and has a higher water content. For another, the female heart beats eight to ten times more per minute, resulting in diminished endurance. And she has to rest more frequently because her lungs, being smaller for her size, are unable to take in large enough quantities of oxygen.

THERE are other major points of difference and they all add up to the inescapable result: Men can run faster, jump higher, throw a ball farther, swim more rapidly, walk longer distances, hit a golf ball better, smash a tennis ball more accurately—do everything in sports better, quicker, more spectacularly than women. In fact, there isn't a single sport in which the best woman athlete could equal the performance of the best man!

For confirmation, look in the record books.

The female Olympic mark for the 100-meter run, set in 1936 by Helen Stephens of the U.S., is 11.5 seconds. The male record was hung up by Eddie Tolan. His time? Ten point three seconds!

In 1948, Alice Coachman of the U.S., in the running high jump, leaped a big 5 ft. 6 1/4 inches, a mark equalled and surpassed at any high-school track-and-field meet. Yet it's the women's record for the event in

the Olympics. Walter Davis, on the other hand, holds the male record set in 1952, 6 ft. 8.32 inches. The female record in the Olympics for the running broad jump is held by Yvette Williams of New Zealand, 20 ft. 5.66 inches. The male mark, held by Jesse Owens and set in 1936, is 26 ft. 5 inches.

And so it goes in every event, in all sorts of competition, in every school and every country. The female champion can't stand a chance against even a male second-rater.

Give credit where credit is due. Research has conclusively shown that women are constitutionally stronger than men. They have a ten percent greater life span than their opposites, which may or may not be due to the fact that the male role of scrambling for the buck and hitting the top of the heap—to get the mink coats and Cadillacs for the women—consigns them to an early grave. Be that as it may, statistics of the U.S. Public Health Service show that women resist disease better, with the death rate among women in each age group consistently lower than for men.

There is, however, a big "nevertheless."

Dr. J. B. Rice points out that the ladies suffer from minor physical disturbances nearly *twice as often*. "Even when you eliminate 'female complaints,'" he says, "they are still sick 20 percent oftener." Dr. Rice tells you that females are far more prone to psychosomatic disorders, that is, illnesses of the body stemming from emotional problems.

And have some more findings relating to physical superiority of the sexes. Tuttle of Consolidated Vultee reported after studying women factory workers during the last war: "By and large, women are less emotionally stable, more sensitive to weather conditions, altitudes and other environmental influences which men take in stride." The Women's Bureau in Washington has revealed that one out of three women suffer from abnormalities of the forefoot and that males develop foot ailments only one-fifteenth as often as the gals. A Minneapolis oral surgeon, after a year's study, disclosed that men can exert three times as much biting pressure as women.

Turn now to one of the strangest aspects of this man-woman business. Women, who claim to be superior, can't even be tops in their own fields! For instance:

Almost every major restaurant entrusts its kitchen to a male chef.

The majority of famous *courtiers*, the folks who design what milady will wear next season—are men.

The best hairdressers and those with the largest following—are men.

MAN is more judicious,
stable, impartial,
logical and stronger.

The most authoritative beauty experts—are men.

Let Dr. Simon Baruch sum it up for you: "Women," he declares, "have not placed themselves at head of the professions which are practically their own."

And you still haven't heard it all. This will kill you.

At the Brooklyn Red Cross headquarters, classes are held regularly for expectant mothers, instructing them in all the necessary functions of baby care. Similar instruction is also given in separate sessions to prospective fathers, with the guys learning everything from how to burp and diaper the coming infant to preparing formulas and giving baths.

I asked a Red Cross representative if any differences had been noted and I was told this:

"The men are much more attentive in class than the mothers-to-be. They ask the more intelligent questions, catch on to the methods more rapidly, do all-around better work."

Would this be a hint to the crowning ignominy, that men actually make better mothers than women? I asked a number of pediatricians what they thought and got some eye-popping answers.

A Queens baby doctor declared: "I frequently have to explain things several times to a mother who brings in a child for a regular examination, but once is generally enough for a father. The young man always seems to grasp the instructions more quickly."

Another physician asserted from the vantage point of 30 years' experience: "Doubtless it is true that a woman can adjust a better diaper, dress a child neater and have more patience feeding him. But when it comes to general supervision, giving the correct orders on what to do, the father is generally more capable. His decisions, too, on what to do in emergencies are frequently more correct than women's."

Still another pediatrician explained that men read more books on the psychological phases of child rearing and hence can handle their offspring more intelligently. They often have to explain the different reasons why junior does or does not do things to their wives.

Now let's switch the spotlight to personal traits and characteristics. More surprises are due.

WOMEN can't even be tops in their own fields.

One of the most significant, yet virtually unpublicized studies in connection with this whole relationship between the sexes was done not long ago at the University of Minnesota. Investigators selected several hundred men and women students and submitted them to a questionnaire on just what their expectations were for their future adult roles in marriage and with a family, in jobs and in community participation.

Hear the results as published by Arnold M. Rose:

"The total number of things an average woman expects to do adds up to an impossible time schedule for her. She cannot do all these things, or she will do them more superficially than she expects to. In any case, her adult role is not yet clear to the average girl of college student age."

The girls, it seems, replied in their questionnaire that they wanted to get married, raise a family, join in various community enterprises, engage in hobbies, participate in sports, do church work, travel. They expected to get jobs and carry on with them beyond the birth of their children. They said they wanted to be at least as active as the men folk in leisure-time activities.

Concluded Rose:

"Because adult roles are indefinite for women, the young girl is less able to plan realistically for her future and to receive the training necessary for successful functioning in any role. Then due to the lack of training and planning, she is not well equipped when she becomes an adult to play a definite role successfully. This is almost as true of the role of mother and housewife as it is of career woman. It is perhaps especially true of the combination of roles, part-time housewife and mother, part-time volunteer for social or civic welfare activities and occasional worker which many middle class women try to fill."

How does the score stand on honesty?

Crime statistics of almost every kind in every State show conclusively that men commit far more offenses than women, right down the line. The Uniform Crime Reports of the Federal Bureau of Investigation for a recent year reveal that of a total of 793,671 arrests throughout the nation, only 76,583 were females. Men led the list in criminal homicide (5,482 against 854), robbery (18,930 against 849), gambling (13,965 against

1,525), forgery and counterfeiting (10,395 against 1,348), embezzlement and fraud (19,505 against 1,934) and so on.

There can be no arguing the point as far as crime is concerned. We can, however, make the useful observation that our legal system, actuated by an unaccountable type of chivalry, manifestly favors the female criminal over the male. Hans Von Hentig, professor of criminology at the University of Kansas City, declares in his book, "Crime: Causes and Conditions": "On the long journey from arrest to prison there are three filtering stages of criminal procedure. In all of them the female is distinctly favored."

He points out, for example, that in Oregon one year 54.6 percent of the male cases were eliminated in preliminary hearings while 63.8 of the female cases were dropped. Grand juries freed more than twice as many women who had been arrested on various charges as they did men. And, finally, the courts cleared 39.3 percent of all the men brought to trial against 60 percent of all the women.

But there is another aspect of the crime situation which merits consideration. It's juvenile delinquency, a major sore spot now and the subject of a recent Senatorial investigation. Delinquency has grown alarmingly since 1940 and particularly disturbing is the rise in offenses among girls. Local authorities, as well as the FBI, have asserted that teen-age girl crime has nearly doubled in vagrancy, drunkenness, disorderly conduct, prostitution and sexual waywardness of all kinds.

Of interest, too, is the astonishing increase in the number of girl gangs. Strictly a masculine business until recently, many large cities are now plagued by mushrooming bands of young girls who give themselves exotic names and go to town on the town. They generally ally themselves as auxiliaries to boy gangs and even assist them in their murderous street fights against rivals.

In Brooklyn, N.Y., the girl gangsters have hit on a neat little dodge to keep their boy friends from the toils of the law. En route to battle, the girls secrete the weapons of war in their dungarees or bosoms in the belief that the cops wouldn't think of searching girls for such things as shivs or zip guns. They're generally right. When they reach the battle arena, the articles of war are handed over.

The attitude toward sex on the part of these female hoods is something for the archives. There are initiation proceedings which put even the most prankish fraternities to

shame and a number of the girl gangs insist on this membership rite: the newcomer must be initiated sexually by a selected member of a boy gang in view of the entire band.

But there is another aspect of honesty beside crime. It's lying. Dr. William Moulton Marsten, who originated the lie detector, once made up a list of social lies, the little white kind, and went to a Junior League group. He asked if the women ever gave false excuses to their dates or their husbands, if they ever told men they had never loved anyone else, if they ever made false pretenses to build up their reputations or to enliven conversations.

The verdict, Dr. Marsten reported, was unanimous. All the women told some of the social lies on the list. Some even told *all* the lies! Declared Dr. Marsten:

"Contrasting this dishonesty, which one might almost call professional, with results in a similar group of men, it must be confessed that the men won the honesty crown by a handsome margin."

There's one more point that needs mentioning. Not long ago Ashley Montagu, who penned a work called "The Natural Superiority of Women," declared in an article that men are actually jealous of women's ability to bear children. "The artificial creations of men are sort of substitutes for their inability to create naturally," he wrote. "They like to 'nurse' ideas, and claim a creation of theirs with the words 'that's my baby' and this may be merely more than just a way of speaking—but I shall not press the point, I throw it out for such suggestive value as it may have."

Now let's see. Women wear all the men's clothes they possibly can, don't they? They don't slacks, put on men's shirts, dungarees, polo shirts, other wearables which are strictly masculine. On the other hand, have you ever known a normal male to put on a single item of feminine attire at any time—except for a gag? Wouldn't this show that women subconsciously envy men, want to be men? In any event, it proves no more nor less than Professor Montagu's astonishing suggestion that men are jealous of women because they can't have babies!

Women superior to men? Tell the gals to stop being femi-nicompoops. Evidence proves men are more intelligent, physically superior, have greater strength of character, are more creative in the arts and sciences and have the heavier percentage of fine traits.

Now that the facts are in, maybe we'll have a little peace and quiet around here.



Sitting a thousand miles above the earth in an artificial satellite, he had the power of life and death in his hands. The temptation to use that power was like nothing else he had ever experienced.

Button, Button

■ by NELSON BOND

Illustrated by TRACY SUGARMAN

It would be better, he thought, if you didn't have to look at it. Easier if you could find something, *anything*, to occupy your hands. But all the instruments—except that one, of course—were completely automatic. Smoking was forbidden in all compartments save the recreation sector. And you grew weary, finally, of *solitaire*. Then the oppressive restlessness crept in. You became increasingly aware of your aloneness; the tight, hard, gnawing circle of your own ideas; the tenseness and the gathering temptation.

Odd that temptation should be symbolized by a half-inch, half-ounce disc. Disturbing that hot impulse could be stirred by a cold, inanimate object. Incredible that torment could assume the image of a tiny crimson button.

Jeff Corcoran's hand reached forth and touched that button gingerly, tentatively, without pressure. It was smooth and cool and infinitely inviting. With an abrupt effort he withdrew his hand. His fingers raked the scattered cards before him and shuffled them with a furious intensity, doggedly spread them in the pattern of another of those interminable, diverting games of patience.

Twelve games and thirty fretful minutes later, Bob Craig appeared. He lounged easily across the Gunner's Post, selecting handloops with the catlike grace of one who has almost forgotten how to move without such aids, his progress more a guided float than walking. He eased into the control-chair beside Jeff, his eyes flickering wry amusement at the cards fanned before the younger man.

"Gets a little dull at times, eh, Corcoran?"

Jeff said, "That observation, my friend, wins the Interplanetary Understatement Award for the Year 1981. The plaintive sound you hear in the distance is my personal meemies screaming for release."

Craig grinned.

"I know. Life on the Wheel gets pretty damned monotonous at times. But you should make the Venus run some time. Twenty-one weeks in a vacuum-jug, with nothing to look at but the ugly maps of a handful of companions you learn to detest wholeheartedly before the first month is over."

"That may be tiresome," conceded Jeff. "But not—"

He stopped abruptly. Craig's brows quivered him.

"Not what?"

"Nothing," said Jeff. "I guess I'm a little space-happy. Well . . . time to take over?"

"Almost."

The two men exchanged places. Craig glanced at the chronometer, flicked the switch of the tape-timer and reported on duty. "11:59 Greenwich Mean Time. Lieutenant Craig relieving Ensign Corcoran at Gunner's Post. Over."

He sprawled back in the control-man's swivel chair, kicked off his grippers, lifted his feet to the instrument panel before him, and sighed.

"So begins another exciting episode in the adventurous career of Bobby Craig, Boy Wheelman," he declaimed derisively. "Yesterday we left our hero battling the grim ogre, Morpheus, in whose arms he was a helpless babe. Today—"

Jeff said suddenly, "Craig—"

"Hm?"

"This probably sounds silly, but . . . what do you do when you're here all alone for two solid hours?"

"Why," shrugged Craig, "what the regulations call for. Check the instruments at fifteen minute intervals for ground zero location, trajectory and course deviation relative to the Bubble down there—" He tossed a casual thumb toward the viewpoint through which the ball of Earth loomed against the spangled ebony of space like a gigantic mottled marble floating in a curd of cloud—"Maintain a

record of all observations and audio pick-ups regarding meteorological phenomena, ionization shifts, or anything else that might affect ballistic computations . . . routine duties. What else is there to do?"

"That's just it," replied Jeff bitterly. "Nothing. Abysmally damned nothing! Well . . . see you later."

He slipped into his magnetic gripper boots and reached for the first of the series of handloops that would assist him in his wallowing crawl from the rim of the Wheel to the recreation quarters nearer the hub. As he lurched away, Bob Craig was bending forward to scan the dials, jotting an observation entry in the log . . .

Jeff went first to the Fresher Room for a shower. In the bathbox, feathery plumes of water jetting from every pore of the enclosure whirled weightless about him in a dancing cloud. *This was one of the good features, he decided, of living on an artificial satellite a thousand miles above Earth's surface. Droplets uninfluenced by gravity did not cascade upon him to be lost, but clung to him like mist beneath a fall.* The water was cool and fresh and wonderful. After two minutes of its drenching spray he felt like a new man. He suction-cleared the bathbox, floated from it, slipped into space-briefs and went to the galley for a bite of lunch.

McWhorter, steward of the Wheel, provided him with a cage of sandwiches, a ball of tea, and dour conversation.

"Hello, Mr. Corcoran. Anything new on the Pan-Am crisis?"

"Not that I know of," said Jeff. He washed down a bite of ham-and-cheese with a gulp of tea squeezed from a plastic sphere. "You heard anything?"

McWhorter shook his head.

"Nothing good. VanBrugh was in a while ago. He says the Feds are massing paratroops at every base in South America."

VanBrugh was Observations officer. Jeff frowned.

"In spite of the U.N. warning?"

"Warning! Words don't frighten dictators. Remember '62? There was no stopping the Communists until the Nations finally got tough. Force is the only language warlords understand. If I were you—" The steward nodded grimly—"I'd be damn glad I controlled a button that can do something about it."

"Then I'm glad you're not me," said Jeff. "We're not stationed here to take sides in international arguments, Mac."

McWhorter looked faintly disgusted.

"I don't understand you, Ensign. It's your country they're making faces at. You're an American, aren't you?"

"I was born in the United States," acknowledged Jeff. "I'm a Patrolman now."

He touched the insignia pinned to the breast pocket of his blouse, the Wheel medallion with its proud inscription: *Mundo serve.*

"You know our motto, Mac. 'To serve the world.' The world . . . not any single nation or group of nations."

"So," said McWhorter impatiently, "when anyone threatens to disturb the peace of the world, you should act."

"When such a threat is proven," replied Jeff. "But on decisions calmly weighed and decided, not made in hot haste or anger. We serve the world. We don't rule it."

In the Recreation Room the Pan-Am crisis was the dominant topic of conversation. Here, however, comment was more sober and restrained. The officers gathered here were Academy graduates trained to think in terms of world—not geographic—sovereignities. Two of the men, erstwhile citizens of the South American Federation, were greatly embarrassed by the conflict brewing a thousand miles below.

Pedro Gonzales of the Argentine said, "I can't understand my countrymen. Surely they can solve their differences with the North American Alliance by some means short of war."

VanBrugh offered encouragingly, "I think they will. After all, there hasn't been a shooting war on Earth since the Wheel was built five years ago. And with good reason. We pass over every inhabited corner of the globe once every twenty-four hours. What's more, our guns dominate every portion. No nation would be fool enough to defy a U.N. warning."

Manuel daSilva said with gloomy dignity, "You don't understand the temper of my people, Jan. Odds, danger, death, mean nothing to them when they are aroused. One or a dozen bombs would be lost in the Matto Grasso of my country alone—and we are but one unit of the Federation. A million lives would be written off as expendable if the stakes were high enough."

"And don't forget," he added, "if they are vulnerable, so are we. They have atomic cannon, too. And the Wheel is not too small an object to be hit. Last year's war games proved that."

Jeff Corcoran offered swiftly, "Not necessarily, Mike. During the war games we were established as an invariable objective moving in a regular orbit. Actually, we're not. Ten minutes after the first shot is fired at us from Earth, the Wheel's auxiliary rockets can change our height and

speed, throw us into an incomputable eccentric orbit, make us an almost impossible target."

"True," nodded daSilva. "But suppose we are hit before the orbit is shifted? Or even if we are not—how are you, a gunner, going to fire with any accuracy from an erratic orbit? Had you thought of that?"

Jeff hadn't. The mere idea was sobering. It was one thing to sit snugly in the Gunner's Post of an artificial satellite revolving bi-hourly in a predictable course around Earth at 1,075 miles elevation, moving at a constant 15,400 miles per hour, and on the basis of these known factors to calculate the ballistic formulae required to drop an atomic warhead on any given spot of Earth's surface. It would be another thing entirely to attain even a fractional degree of such accuracy if both target and gun were moving. He could not do it, Jeff conceded frankly. And he doubted seriously that any man aboard the Wheel, including the Old Man himself, Admiral Berkeley, could feed into the electronic calculators those involved equations that would pull the trick.

He said uncomfortably, "Well, we're talking improbabilities. The chances are a thousand to one they'll stop short of a shooting war."

Gonzales smiled thinly.

"You hope, Corcoran," he sighed. "So do we all."

NIGHT came abruptly as the Wheel plunged into the black cone of Earth's penumbra. Corcoran went to the Communications deck where visiphone contact was maintained with Earth. There he received permission to make a personal call. Minutes later the switcher signalled him that contact was established. Jeff stepped into the scanning booth. Illuminated on the screen before him was the face of Moira Daniels, her eyes alight when she recognized her caller.

"Jeff, darling! When the operator said it was a space *eldee* I hoped it would be you. How are you?"

"Fine," said Jeff. "Just fine." Then: "Hoped it would? Who else might it have been?"

"Now, Jeff," laughed Moira, "you're not going to play the jealous fiancé, are you? It might have been *lots* of others. Wally, for instance—"

"Wally?" Jeff's voice rose swiftly, sharply. "Your brother's in service again?"

Moira looked faintly troubled. "Yes. He was recalled to active duty last week."

"But, damn it, Wally's thirty-three years old!"

"Thirty-four," corrected Moira. "So much the worse. Too old for task-flight duty. How many classes did they call up?"

Moira said gravely, "Five, Jeff. '46 to '50. It's the Pan-Am crisis. But of course you know."

"I know," said Jeff grimly. "I've seen."

"You can see more than we can, Jeff," said Moira. "We're depending on you Wheelmen." Her tone was deliberately light, but her words were earnest. "And keep a steady finger on the button."

"Don't worry," promised Jeff. "I will." And then, because he had not called across the void merely to deepen the depression that already engulfed him. "But how about you, Moira? And our plans? Everything going well?"

"Perfectly, darling. The girls have been showering me like mad. I've been fretting myself into a shadow trying to decide between aluminum and copper kitchenware. The bridesmaids' dresses have been ordered, and Betsy is rehearsing *violently* to be the sweetest, most demure flowergirl who ever walked down an aisle. So, just like the gal in the song, I'll be waiting at the church when you get here—"

A sudden fear infused her voice, her eyes. "Jeff, you are coming home, aren't you? They haven't cancelled your leave?"

"Nothing like that," Jeff reassured her. "There's no telling, of course, what may happen if things get worse. But so far as I know now, I'll be there to play my part in the great event of the century."

"Then let's pray nothing happens. Jeff, if anything should upset our plans now, I think I'd—"

The voice of the switcher broke in apologetically. "Sorry, sir. I must ask you to ring off. Priority call."

"Confound it," grumbled Jeff, "this isn't the only Earth-Wheel circuit, is it? You must have another—"

"Jeff, dear—" That was Moira. "It doesn't matter. We can talk again later. Good night, darling. It was wonderful seeing you."

"Moira—" called Jeff. But the screen was dark. With a blown kiss and a smile Moira had hung up. Reluctantly Jeff left the booth and wandered rimside to the Observation deck, where for some time he sat and moodily watched the dappled sphere of Earth turn lazily beneath the racing Wheel.

UNGEOGRAPHICALLY inverted from this vantage point, the land-masses of North and South America stood out clearly. Perhaps, thought Jeff with a sort of savage humor, the Federation dictator should serve a trick on the Wheel. If he could see the relative positions of the neighbor continents from this perspective it might allay his bellicose ambition to see his continent atop the world.

North America. Jeff picked out the broad span of the United States, and what should be the state of Illinois. At the end of Lake Michigan he saw the glittering web that was the sprawling city of Chicago. He wondered with a dully aching hunger which of those fused pinpoints was the light that gleamed from Moira's window.

When at last last he turned in, it was to toss in his straps for still another hour. Finally he fell into a troubled sleep to dream of Moira attempting to choose between aluminum and copper kitchenware. She turned to him for help, but every time he raised a pot or pan to study it, it turned into a baleful crimson button.

THROUGHOUT the next day tension mounted steadily. Dawn observations showed the South Americans had moved again during the night. The Camera Room released a film anxiously viewed by all Wheel personnel, exposures intimately disclosing the involved sectors of Earth telescopically surveyed from areas one hundred miles in diameter to detailed studies of a mere five hundred yards.

These pictures conclusively revealed the militant intentions of the Feds. Forty divisions were gathered at the Panama Canal. Where such hot embers smouldered, sooner or later one must burst into flame. It was a question of time, now, when the first spark would blaze. And a moment of decision for the United Nations. Should the Wheel act now to forestall the conflagration, or should it wait until the fire was fanned to life?

The air and spaceways crackled with radiograms. A special World Court messenger had been dispatched by jet to Panama. It was rumored that the U.N. was preparing an ultimatum to the Federation. Cuba had offered to provide a neutral meeting-place where the bickering Americas could sit down around a conference table and solve their problems amicably.

Pro-Federation sympathizers in Madrid had smashed the windows of the American embassy, had been arrested. A swiftly-organized society of Spaniards-for-Iberian-America had immediately produced bail for the culprits, and a huge, fiesta-like parade had celebrated their release from jail.

Children were being evacuated from Central American cities. Washington and Rio, Bahia and New York, were under blackout. Mexico had warned all nations that unauthorized aircraft crossed her territory at their own risk. Tension mounted tangibly on Earth . . . and in the small compartment where Jeff Corcoran sat brooding over a crimson button less than an inch from his fretful finger.

An hour since he had plotted the coordinates that would send a lethal

messenger hurtling from the Wheel to the capital city of the Federation, epicenter of the fever gripping all mankind. Now as the tumult, coded and vocal, hammered at his ears, Jeff's anger mounted with each passing second.

Gabble, taunts, threats, he thought rebelliously. Interminable words cascading in a torrent that terrifies a world. Was there no peace and quiet anywhere? Yes... certainly...

He thought of his own home in Santa Barbara; of the green, rolling hills and placid fields, the grapes that (about now) were rounding into sweet, ripe, velvet fullness. He thought of Mom, towel-urbaned, the purple stain of grape upon her hands, on straining-cloths and kettles; Mom in a steaming fragrance of the vines, moulding the fruit-pulp to taste-tempting jellies.

Dad, harvesting the grapes. And pigtailed Sis pushing the vacuum, tidying the house. And Tommy, his kid brother, delivering evening papers: papers that would bear grim headlines: *War Threat Grows. Defense Chief Orders Blackout as Peace Hopes Dwindle.*

It wasn't fair, thought Jeff, that gentle folks like these—his folks—must fret and fear and endure disruption of their happy way of life because a tyrant half a world away wanted to test the power of his rule. It wasn't fair or right. A man should do something about it. Particularly a man who feels beneath his hand—smooth, cool, incredibly inviting—a crimson disc which, oh! so lightly pressed, could spell an end to such unfairness.

He thought of Moira. Moira shopping for her trousseau; Moira gravely deliberating her choice of pots and pans with which to cook the meats they two would share; Moira, her soft eyes troubled.

It wasn't fair to her—to any girl—that she must face the chilling threat of war, the knowledge that of those who ventured forth to fight many—perhaps her man—would not come back again. War was tough on men. It was still tougher on the women who had to sit it out, to wait with white, tensed lips for casualty reports.

It wasn't right these things should have to be when here, up here, the power lay to cry halt to these fears. His power. His personal and godlike power of life and death...

Hold it! he thought. What would the Academy instructors think of that? "To serve the world." That was the credo of the force he represented. To sit above the world in judgment seat, but not to judge. To watch, suggest and guide... but to compel only when every other measure failed. This was the obligation of the Wheel, the duty of a U.N. Space Patrolman.

And yet... the Federation. Warring troops massed on a tense frontier. An antlike stream of warriors poised to spring; a hornet host of planes aswarm on airports, eager to dart into the air and hurl the lethal barbs of their atomic might on innocents like Moira and Sis and Mom.

How better to serve the world, he thought, than to destroy those who attacked its peace? Suddenly the old line danced through his mind, "Button, button; who's got the button?"

And the appalling answer...

The audiophone rasped orders, and Jeff tensed in his chair. "Gunnery Post, Red alert! Stand by for action. Deadline at ten ack-emma."

Deadline? That meant the long-deferred firm warning had been issued. The U.N. at last had acted, had sent an ultimatum to the Federation. Lay down your arms, this message would convey, stripped of high-sounding formal phrases. *We have been patient to the breaking point. We have observed your deeds, and disapprove. Cease now. Disperse your gathered troops—or else!*

And now, thought Jeff, what next? What would the Federation's answer be? Servile compliance? Not if da-Silva were right. ("You don't under-

stand the temper of my people. Odds, danger, death, mean nothing to them.") No, they would strike first. And the first thing they would strike would be their most dangerous assailant—the scudding mote a thousand miles above that threatened with parental punishment.

How could one tell when the missile had been launched that would flash through space at supersonic speed to smash the Wheel? To crumble into ruin the metal moon that was man's proudest, most ambitious artifact? To dash Ezekiel's chariot from the sky so men might hew their devastating way unhindered over Earth?

To hell, he thought with sudden violence, to hell with all this *nausikish indecision!* It is mad folly that we should sit here waiting to be attacked when we have the means—I have the means—to end it.

"Button, button; who's got the button?" I have! I, Jeff Corcoran, guardian of the skies. I, Jeff Corcoran, modern avatar of Krishna the watcher, Siva the destroyer. I, Jeff Corcoran, pro tem god of Earth.

Convulsively his finger tensed. The crimson button yielded...

It seemed like hours, but it must have been less than ten seconds that Jeff Corcoran sat stricken with dismay at what he had done. No, not what he had done, but what his finger, almost as if moving of its own volition, had wrought in havoc's way.

In those stunned seconds a frightful vision danced before his eyes. He saw the bomb-bay gape, the winged missile leap from the belly of the Wheel and flash toward Earth at a speed of more than a thousand miles per hour. His mind's eye spanned the distance with that weapon, saw its landing. The brief blaze in the bright Brazilian skies a split second before it struck with a crash of fury, its trailing bannish sound-wave lost in the dark thunder of an atom blast, drowning the scream of those thousands, perhaps millions, who would perish instantly.

An agony of self-reproach shook through him as he realized what he had done. For an instant panic threatened to engulf him. He half rose from his seat, torn briefly by the mad impulse to run, to hide, in any way to flee responsibility for his wild, reckless act.

Then the training of his Academy years came to his aid. Awareness of what now must be done surged back upon him coolly, swiftly, surely. Even as his mind appraised the problem, his conditioned body was taking needed measures.

His right hand flipped the switch that opened a circuit to all interceptor rocket posts on Earth. Crisply he rapped his warning message to them:

"Interceptor Control, Earth... all posts. Wheel calling all Interceptor

any sore

that

does not heal

...is the first of the seven commonest danger signals that may mean cancer...but should always mean a visit to your doctor.

The other six danger signals are—**1** A lump or thickening, in the breast or elsewhere **2** Unusual bleeding or discharge **3** Any change in a wart or mole **4** Persistent indigestion or difficulty in swallowing **5** Persistent hoarseness or cough **6** Any change in normal bowel habits.

For other facts about cancer that may some day save your life, phone the American Cancer Society office nearest you, or write to "Cancer"—in care of your local Post Office.

American Cancer Society



stations. Bomb loosed 9:23 ack-emma G.M.T. Target Rio. Trajectory, code three-oh-five. Firing co-ordinates nineteen degrees six minutes at declension—" He read the significant figures from the dials—"Raise total screen above the target area. Raise total screen above the target area. That is all. Acknowledge to Wheel Command."

He did not wait to hear the buzzing drone as of a hundred bees that would rise from one interceptor post after another, acknowledgments that within the space of minutes would result in the erection of a rocket screen over the threatened sector. He knew it would take the bomb forty-seven minutes to reach Earth. Long before then the screen would be complete. The warhead would dispel itself against an interceptor high in the troposphere. Briefly, a burst of flame would light the sky, and casual observers miles below might pause to marvel momentarily that a meteoroid should so appear in broad daylight.

He did not wait for this. For now, his madness ended, Jeff made his second necessary call. This time his voice was not intense but dull. He said, "Ensign Corcoran, Gunny Post, calling Wheel Command. Please send replacement immediately. I am reporting myself under arrest."

Rear Admiral Berkeley, CINCAS, nodded Jeff into the seat across the desk from him.

"Well, Corcoran?" he said.

Jeff said, "I have no defense to offer, sir, for what I did. My training was designed to teach me better. My mistake lay in trying to think for myself. And my thoughts were . . . confused."

How tell another about Mom, and the fragrant scent of grapes in a steamy kitchen? About Dad and Sis and Tommy? About Moira soberly deliberating the comparative virtues of aluminum and copper kitchenware?

"I was confused," repeated Jeff, "and I betrayed my trust. I can't excuse myself. I can only apologize and take whatever punishment is coming to me."

Berkeley steeped his fingers thoughtfully.

"It might interest you to learn that less than an hour after you did what you did, your impulse was proven to be completely unwarranted. Did you know that in response to the U.N. ultimatum the Federation forces have withdrawn from the Canal Zone? And that conference negotiations are under way?"

"No, sir. I didn't know. But I'm glad to learn it now." Jeff added evenly, "It makes me look even more of a fool, but I'm glad, anyway. It proves the Wheel can do what it's here for."

"Yes, Corcoran," nodded Berkeley. "For the first time the Wheel's commanding influence for peace has been demonstrated. This may not be the last time we are called upon to act. But the need will arise less and less often as the nations understand that we are a mighty and impartial arbiter—Earth's man-made guardian angel in the sky."

"As to yourself—" The Admiral pursed his lips. "What do you think should be your punishment?"

Jeff said, "That's not mine to decide, sir. There is a girl. We were to be married next month. But now . . . I suppose there will be a court-martial. I can offer no defense except . . . temporary madness, I suppose. Not insanity. Just madness of a sort. I don't expect you to understand."

"Despite which," said the Admiral, "I do. I know exactly what you mean, Lieutenant Corcoran."

Jeff said automatically, "Ensign, sir."

"It is not considered good form," said the Wheel commander, "to correct a superior officer . . . Lieutenant."

Still for a moment the meaning of his words did not sink in. Then finally they registered. Jeff stared in stupefaction at the Admiral's smile.

"Sir, I don't understand! You mean—"

"—that you have passed the test," said Berkeley. "The last and most important test that proves all Gunny Officers aboard the Wheel. Passed it with flying colors."

"But, sir, I violated every regulation in the rule books—"

"There are some rules," said the commander, "that cannot be written in books. Some regulations impossible to teach. Physical obedience can be compelled, Lieutenant; the mind is less responsive to dictation from any authority save its own sound instinct—which today you have proven to our satisfaction."

"But the button, sir! I pressed the button—"

"Corcoran," the Admiral asked abruptly, "how many men have tested as Gunny candidates on the Wheel since it was built?"

"I wouldn't know, sir. Perhaps twenty?"

"The exact number is fifty-four. Now hear this. How many times would you guess that in the past a Gunny candidate has pressed that crimson button?"

"Never," said Jeff abjectly. "No other idiot—"

"Wrong, Lieutenant. Again the correct answer is fifty-four. One moment of madness for each man who ever sat in that control seat and for dreary hours had to stare at that damned tempting disc."

He shook his head reminiscently. "I know what it feels like, Corcoran. Five years ago I sat in that seat and felt my godhead grow. And pressed that crimson button . . . as you did."

"But, sir—" stammered Jeff. "That means—"

"Fifty-four candidates have pressed that button. Yet only seventeen have qualified as Gunny Officers. Now do you understand, Lieutenant? Failure lies not in the deed, but in the aftermath. More than two-thirds of those tested froze with horror at what they had done, cracked beneath the strain, lost their heads . . . and did nothing."

"Only sixteen others, like yourself, proved sound in the emergency. When they realized the damage they had done they went to work to undo it. To correct the mistake that—having learned their lesson—they might be expected never to repeat."

Berkeley continued gently, "The button over which you brooded, Corcoran, did not actually release an atom bomb. Its mechanism was remote-controlled by a Gunny Officer who had previously passed the ordeal you have just endured. In the same way, your call to Earth's interceptor stations did not go out through regular channels, but was diverted so that Earth might not be unduly alarmed by a non-existent threat."

He smiled. "You understand, I'm sure, these precautions? It was a grueling test we gave you, but a needed one. Ours is a grave responsibility up here. We on the Wheel have been granted the trust of three billions of people. We can repose that confidence only in men strong enough to assume it."

"When you return from your leave—which, by the way, Lieutenant, starts immediately—the button beneath your hand will be a real one. I think you'll find it sobering to know the power of life and death which you control is one you have proven you can wisely exercise."

"And now, Lieutenant—if you'll permit me to wish you every happiness—" Admiral Berkeley smiled—"I'd like you to bring me back a slice of that wedding cake—"

Jeff shook hands numbly, feeling the warm pressure, knowing it to be the symbol of a new companionship, a fellowship of tested, proven men. It was at once an accolade and transfer, the shifting of a burden much too great for any save the sturdiest of shoulders. He accepted that transfer gladly, but gravely, too.

It is no easy thing, he thought, to be a Wheelman. God has seen fit to show us the pathway to our sister stars. Let us now pray that he will help us guard our parent Earth.

**Here, for the first time
in any magazine, is the best reason
why Russia will never
attack the United States.**

■ By H. ALLEN SMITH

There are several reasons why I am not in favor of a Third World War and these reasons include (1), I burn easily; (2), loud noises make me jump, and (3), I'm anxious about who will win the National League pennant in 1965. I pick the Giants.

People keep telling me, however, that Number Three is coming, that it's only a matter of time. If and when it does come I want to be helpful, so I have started stockpiling place names.

One of the greatest minor facts of the war in Korea

What'll we call **DNEPROPETROVSK?**



has been the emergence of the American fighting man as a namer of hills and vales. Operating on foreign soil where the place names are incomprehensible as well as unpronounceable, he has simply changed them to suit his own understanding and tongue. Or, given a hill or a valley or a river or a bridge that has no name, he has labeled it with a designation that represents something dear to him back home. Such as pork chop, or Jane Russell.

Robert Louis Stevenson once said that no other part of the world can match the United States for rich, poetical, humorous and picturesque place names. We have always had a genius for bestowing distinctive names on our rivers, our hills, our valleys, and especially our towns. What other people could do better than name a town after the buffalo? Or come up with such community names as Smackover, Pickettville, Zigzag, Bugtussle, Jitney, Rabbit Hash, Okay, Peculiar, Lick Skillet, Alligator, Hot Coffee, Social Circle, Gizzard, Oblong, Cornstalk, Left Hand, Hog Eye, Gourd Neck, Black Ankle, Noodle and Wham? Where on this earth would anyone else possess enough unconscious poetry to name a stream the West Fork of the South Fork of the North Fork of the San Joaquin River?

The military practice of giving American names to foreign landmarks began, on a small scale, during World War II. The Normandy beaches where the Yanks struck were called Omaha and Utah and they are still known by those names. There was a village somewhere in the Pacific islands called Times Square and another called Stork Club. Roads and bridges and streets were named for Bing Crosby and Red Barber and Dinah Shore and Li'l Abner.

With the Korean War the boys stepped up production of place names. If a hill or a river or a cape or a plateau already had a name that was pronounceable, they sometimes let it stand. But confront them with a peak having no name at all, or with a name they couldn't handle, and they called it Jane Russell Hill, or Jackson Heights, or Old Baldy, or Porkchop Hill.

At the very beginning of the Korean War the hills were given numbers instead of names. Then came the Battle of No Name Ridge. After that almost every salient and sector got a name. At first these designations were usually geographical, related to some locality back home, such as Capitol Hill, Outpost Texas, Jackson Heights, Death Valley, and the Vegas, Carson and Elko sectors. Then the nomenclature began to grow more picturesque, based on American institutions. I have no doubt that somewhere in Korea there's a Draft Board Swamp, a Veep Ridge, and a Falsie Gulch. We've all read about the events around Sniper Ridge, White Horse Hill, the Punchbowl, Outpost Harry, Bunker Hill, Fool Mountain, the Bowling Alley, Tombstone Hill, and Fanny's Ridge.

This renaming of foreign landmarks is becoming standard procedure with the American troops and it is certain to flourish in a Third World War. Moreover, it is my guess that many of these Yank-given names are going to stick and ultimately the cartographers will have to recognize them on their maps.

I don't think the GI's in World War III will change the names of such places as London, Paris, Rome and Berlin. I'd hate to see them rename the Place de la Concorde, calling it perhaps Cheeseburger Square. I don't think any of us want the Piazza Venezia to be renamed The Loop.

The big push in name-changing, I imagine, will come in Russia. Those people have a talent for unwieldy nomenclature. I am prepared to make some recommendations for that part of the world. I hope the GI's will consider the following:

OLD NAME

Rostov-on-Don
Dnepropetrovsk
Ural Mountains
Bodaibo
Lvov (Lwow)
Magnitogorsk
Moscow
Kharkov
Minsk
Voroshilovgrad
Lenin Peak
Arkhangel'sk
Baku
Dzardzhikau
Leningrad
Uvalli Hills
Bug River
Nizhni Tagil
Stalin Peak
Volga River

Tundras of Komi
Dikh-Tau Mountain
Krasnoselkupsk
Sakhalin Island
Dnieper River
Dniester River
Timan Ridge
Klyuchevskaya Peak
Khanty Mansiisk
Ust-Urt Plateau
Berdigastayakh
Valdai Hills
Caspian Sea
Tbilisi
Lake Issyk-Kul
Odessa
Stalingrad

NEW NAME

— Corn-on-Cob
— My Aching Back
— Palisades Park
— Bebop
— Wowie
— Hydramaticgorsk
— Mamie
— Carhop
— Mink
— Catfish Corners
— Mt. Marilyn Monroe
— Fultonsheen
— Backup
— Dogtagtown
— Godfreygrad
— Singing Commercial Hills
— DDT River
— Hot Rod Crossing
— Tallulah Knob
— Book-of-the-Month-Club Creek
— Plains of Coney
— Chicken Drop Hill
— Grandma Moseskupsk
— Martha's Other Vineyard
— Diaper Crick
— Old Mill Stream
— Rozzum Bag Ridge
— Gootball Hill
— Mickey Mantle
— Must-Hurt Plateau
— Bumperjackyyakh
— Horroconic Ridge
— Aspirin Sea
— Minnieminoso
— Lake Irving Berlin
— Desiarnaz
— Ikegrad

There remains a special category of places within the borders of Moscow (Mamie) itself. I would suggest:

| | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| The Kremlin | — The Kremlin-Hilton |
| Moscow Art Theater | — Roxy |
| Red Square | — White Plains |
| Moscow State University | — Siwash |
| Izvestia | — Sporting News |
| Lenin's Mausoleum | — Cow Palace |
| Bolshoi Theater | — Bijou Theater |
| Blagovyeschenskiy Cathedral | — First Baptist Church |
| Institute of Marx and Engel | — Slippery Rock |
| Great Park of Culture and Rest | — The Pentagon |

We must assume that the boys in the Navy will want to join in the geographical fun, so I propose that we let them rename the larger political subdivisions, such as the Azerbaidzhan Soviet Socialist Republic. My guess is that they'll call it Poop County.

And what about the whole eight million square miles of land that constitutes the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics? What name will the Yanks give to that? Why, East Texas, of course.



At long last—
an intelligent, business-like
private eye, who
makes not a single
wisecrack, as he methodically
solves the case
of the missing lovers.

By ROBERT MARTIN

A TIME OF EVIL

A BLUEBOOK NOVELETTE



The woman was maybe 30, give or take a couple of years, with a slim figure that looked tall even as she sat on the straight chair beside by desk. She wore a cool, short-sleeved linen dress, in a neutral sand tint that almost exactly matched her hair, which she wore in a rather short bob curling just above her shoulders. A tiny straw hat with a brown band was perched on the back of her head. She sat with her long legs crossed, the high heel of a beige sandal bobbing nervously. In her lap she held a straw purse big enough to hold a fifth of bourbon. Her eyes were a chocolate brown, her lips full and red. Her nose was slightly tilted, and the smooth glow of her skin came from just the right amount of sun. Except for a gold wedding band, she wore no ornaments of any kind.

"Mr. Fiske?" she said expectantly.

"Yes," I said, closing the door of the office, where I had a desk in company with two real-estate salesmen, an insurance man, a public stenographer named Sally, and a worried-looking little man who conducted a mail-order business involving a patent medicine

called Nu-Youth. They had all gone home, and the woman and I had the place to ourselves. It was hot and very oppressive. All afternoon thunder had rippled out over the lake, and now, at six o'clock, the sun slanting through the Venetian blinds held an odd saffron look. Since noon the radio had issued intermittent tornado warnings to the Great Lakes area.

The woman said, "Your secretary said I could wait . . ."

"She's not my secretary," I told her, "but a girl who answers the phone for all of us." I waved a hand at the other desks. "She got in touch with me. You're Mrs. Bonner?"

She nodded and gazed at me expectantly.

I felt a faint irritation. It was her move, not mine, but I said, "I'm sorry you had to wait." I took off my Panama and leaned against the desk. I was tired, and it was time for a drink. I wished I had one.

"That's all right," she said. Her voice was soft and pleasing. "I didn't mind." The fading sunlight, coming through the blind, made zebra bars

across her face, shadowing her eyes and glowing brightly on her red mouth. "You look tired, Mr. Fiske. Your work is exhausting?"

"Not especially," I said, wishing that I could see her eyes more clearly. "I'm tired because I played poker until four o'clock this morning."

"You won, I hope?"

"I lost. I always lose."

"Then why do you play?"

"Hope springs eternal." I smiled at her.

She laughed, a low pleasing sound in the quiet room. "Gambling is not one of my vices."

I followed the script. "But you do have vices?"

"Of course," she said coolly. "Many of them. Shall we discuss my vices?"

"I'm sure they're all very nice vices." I paused, and then rather reluctantly threw the script away. "But perhaps we'd better discuss the reason for your visit."

SHE sighed. "It's an unpleasant subject, and I hesitated to come to you—I'm probably worrying unnecessarily—but it's my husband. He hasn't been home for three days."

"Is that unusual?"

She lifted her shoulders in a faint gesture. "Not especially, except that this time I know the woman he's with. I want to find them." She gazed at me brightly, but I thought I saw the glint of tears.

"Divorce?"

"I don't know," she said. "After you find them, I'll decide about that."

"Have you told the police?"

"Of course not. I don't want publicity, if it can be helped. Right now, I just want to find them."

"And maybe testify where—and how—I found them?"

"If necessary."

I shook my head. "I'm sorry. I don't do divorce work. I can give you the name of a man who does, if you like."

She frowned. "But I thought that a private detective—"

"Not me."

"Why not?"

"A matter of ethics," I said virtuously, wishing that I had a dollar for every divorce job I'd worked on.

"But what am I to do?" she asked plaintively. "Go out looking for them myself? I've been told that you are reliable." She opened the straw purse. "If it's money—"

"It's not that," I murmured, my eyes on the purse.

"Oh, stop it," she snapped. "There is no need to haggle. Just tell me how much, and get to work."

I grinned, deciding that I liked her. "All right. I'll try and find your husband and the woman he's with—but that's all."

"Just find them," she said grimly. "I'll take it from there."

"I'll start in the morning," I said. "Would you like to know my rates?"

"No—and I want you to start tonight. Now."

I lit a cigarette and gazed at her. I really had played poker until four in the morning, and I needed sleep, but if I made the merest preliminary investigation tonight it meant a full day's pay for me. "All right," I said. "Tell me about it."

The sun was lower, and the office was in shadow, but the odd saffron light still lingered, accentuating the sun-glow of Mrs. Bonner's face. I could see her eyes now; they were cool and somehow faintly mocking, as if she really considered the whole thing a kind of joke. "What do you need to know?"

"Everything."

"Everything?" There was a veiled suggestiveness in the way she said it.

"I'll need a description of your husband, and the woman. Photos would be very helpful. I'll need to know when and where they were last seen, all about it."

She opened the straw purse, took out a glossy photograph, and handed it to me. It showed three persons in bathing suits standing on a white beach in the sun, with placid water behind them. Two women and a man. One of the women was my new client, Mrs. Bonner, looking very alluring in a brief two-piece arrangement. The other woman was smaller and more slender, with long black hair falling over her naked shoulders. She wore a black one-piece bathing suit which fully revealed the slim, rangy lines of her body. The man was tall and broad, with thick dark hair. He wore dark sun glasses, and his stomach bulged a little above his swim trunks. All three were holding long-stemmed cocktail glasses in a happy toast to the person aiming the camera.

I held up the photo and pointed to the man. "Your husband?"

"Yes. The woman is Angeline Jaeger. We've been chums since high school. We worked in a beauty shop together, and roomed together. She married Ralph Jaeger about three years ago. Then I met Eric—he's my husband—at a party, and, well, we were married a month later. I continued my friendship with Angie, and the four of us have been together a lot. Eric didn't seem to mind having Ralph around, and I knew he liked Angie, but I never thought—"

"That he liked her enough to—uh—run away with her?"

She smiled ruefully. "No, I never thought that."

"Why do you think it now?"

Her lips twisted bitterly. "It's obvious. We asked Angie and Ralph to go to a dinner dance with us at the Skyline Country Club last Saturday night. We all drank too much, I'm afraid, and I noticed that Eric danced with Angie a lot. Then, around eleven o'clock, they just disappeared—and they didn't come back." She gazed at me and spread her hands, palms up. "That's all."

"This is Tuesday," I said. "The third day, and no sign of them?"

"No. Ralph went out to look for them, but he didn't find them. Then we waited in the bar until it closed, and the dance was over. It was rather embarrassing. People joked with us about it, and we tried to keep it—oh, you know—light? We couldn't let them think that we were actually worried."

"Heavens, no," I said. "Not when it was Ralph's wife and your husband. Then what?"

"We left, Ralph and I. The dance was over. We saw that Eric's car was gone. I took Ralph home. Eric had driven out in the afternoon to play golf, and I had picked up Ralph and Angie. We met Eric at the club."

"I see," I said. "How does Ralph feel about it?"

"He's quite upset, naturally."

I tapped the photo. "Ralph took this?"

"Yes, one Sunday at the beach."

"Did you and your husband—get along?"

HER eyes shifted. "Well enough," she said carelessly. "Perhaps we aren't madly in love, but I'm very fond of Eric, and I thought he was of me. I—I tried to be a good wife. After all, he gave me all the things I ever wanted, and he took me away from the beauty shop—the damned arrogant women, the ten-cent tips, the hot dryers—I'll always be grateful to him for that." She paused, and then added, "I hope you understand."

"Yes," I said, thinking that she was just another attractive woman who had married for money, who had tried to live with what it cost her, and who at last had come to the end of her rope. I coughed delicately. "Have you checked the hotels and the tourist courts in the area?"

She flushed faintly. "Ralph did—a few of them."

"I see," I said again. "Are any of your husband's clothes missing? I mean, is there any indication that it was planned?"

She shook her head. "Eric went away in the clothes he was wearing—a dark blue suit, white shirt, blue tie. Angie was wearing a little gray print dress and red shoes. It was an informal dance."

Illustrated by STAN DRAKE

"Did your husband have much cash with him?"

"Not any more than usual, as far as I know. Maybe a hundred dollars, or so."

"Where does he bank?"

She smiled faintly. "I thought of that, too. We have a joint account, and they told me that he'd made no cash withdrawals lately."

"I've asked a lot of questions, Mrs. Bonner, and I have just one more; what is your husband's business?"

"He hasn't any, really. His father founded the Bonner Chemical Company. They make fire extinguishers. Eric owns the controlling stock, and he's chairman of the board, but he doesn't take much part in the operation of the business. He likes boats, and fishing and hunting. Since his father died, I guess you could say that Eric has retired."

"Good for Eric," I said with a minimum of bitterness, and I stood up. "I'll start tonight, and I'll do what I can for you."

SHE arose, too, and she was even taller than I'd expected, but not too tall. "Thank you," she said quietly. She opened her purse, took out a small cream-tinted card and handed it to me. "You can reach me there." She moved to the door in three graceful steps and turned. "You will keep your investigations—discreet?"

"Very."

"As soon as you find them, get in touch with me."

"I'm not to let them know that they've been found?"

"Certainly not," she said crisply. "Just contact me. Is that clear?"

"Perfectly."

She smiled without humor, opened the door and went out.

I stood in the empty office, aware of her lingering scent, and gazed at the card in my hand. It was gilt engraved, in slim script, and told me that Mrs. Eric Bonner lived at 1524 Wyandot Place on the north shore.

The thunder over the lake had grown louder, and lightning crashed nearby. Almost immediately I heard the violent rush of rain, and I remembered the tornado warnings. The blind bellowed inward, and I moved to the window. The rain felt good on my face. The sky out over the lake was a yellowish color, with black clouds hanging low. Lightning cut the clouds, and I blinked. The rain poured with greater intensity. I closed the window, feeling a vague uneasiness about the tornado. I hoped it would miss the city, and I tried to think of friends who had deep and solid basements.

With the window closed, the office was stifling. I put on my hat and went out.



He shrugged, and I suppressed a desire to slap him. "I've had the law here before," he said, "when some of the members have been... indiscreet." He paused, and added, "I hate this job."

Down on the street I waited in the building doorway for the rain to slacken. It didn't, and the sky still held the eerie light. Traffic had thinned out and the few people hurrying along the sidewalk kept glancing upward apprehensively. I turned up my coat collar and ran beside the building, and was only moderately drenched when I gained the Italian restaurant around the corner.

I had two martinis, followed by a huge plate of spaghetti and meat balls. I carried my coffee to a phone booth in the rear and called Buzz De Voe, a sportswriter on one of the local papers. He was at the bar of the Statler, as I knew he would be.

"Buzz, this is Lee Fiske. What do I have to do to get into the Skyline Club?"

He laughed. "Not much. Five hundred a year dues, plus a thousand for a share of Skyline stock. Then the board votes on you. You figure on joining?"

"Hell, no. I just want to do a little snooping around out there some time soon."

"When?"

"Tomorrow morning."

"You're in luck. Tomorrow is the second day of the Midwest Open—it's being played on the Skyline course, and the club is permitting the public to gawk, at three bucks a head. I'm

covering it for the paper. Come on out."

"All right. Maybe I'll see you. Thanks."

When I left the restaurant, the rain had let up a little, but a strong wind was blowing. I ran back to the office building, went up to my floor, and wrote a note to the switchboard girl telling her where I'd be in the morning. Then I got out the city directory, thumbed to the B's and found the name I wanted.

Bonner, Eric W. (Lillian H.), sportsman, chmn. bd. dr. Bonner Chemical Co.

The address checked with that on Lillian Bonner's card. The only new facts I'd learned were their middle initials, and that Eric Bonner was a sportsman. Well, I was a sportsman, too. Poker was a sport, I guessed. I played golf, too, but so did Eric Bonner. In what other sports did he indulge? Would sneaking off with another man's wife be called a sport? Maybe it would, in some circles, but not in mine. But, then, I'm probably a little old fashioned.

The office was still hot, and the rain still drummed on the window. And I was still tired. I decided I'd worked enough for Lillian Bonner to charge her for a day. I went down to my six-year-old sedan and drove through the wind and the rain to my apartment. An envelope was sticking under my door. I picked it up, saw the one penciled word—*Fiske*. I entered the apartment, turned on the lights, closed the door, and tore open the envelope. On a single sheet, three sentences were printed in pencil:

Eric and Angie are far away. They are happy and will never come back. If you interfere you will be sorry.

I read it twice, then tossed it on a table. Routine. Threatening notes were a part of the profession. I won-

dered casually how many people Mrs. Bonner had told that she had hired me to find her husband and Angelina Jaeger. There are crackpots in every strata of society, some harmless, others vicious. The note didn't worry me, but I filed it away in my mind.

As I undressed, I listened to the radio. The tornado was still a danger. The excited voice of the announcer advised all persons in the metropolitan area to seek shelter.

It is moving in a southwesterly direction across the lake at an estimated speed of thirty miles an hour. Weather men say that the wind velocity in the vortex may exceed five hundred miles an hour. Get into shelter, a basement preferably, or under a bridge or a stone archway. Keep calm. If you are in a car...

I turned off the radio and crawled into bed. My apartment building was new and constructed of cement and steel. I went to sleep without any trouble. Once during the night the thunder and the rain wakened me, but the building seemed to be standing firmly, and I went back to sleep again.

In the morning the sun was bright and the sky a clear blue. While I was frying bacon I heard on the radio that the tornado had indeed struck an isolated area on the lake shore, and then had dissipated itself in the direction of Duluth. Except for fallen branches and a few damaged roofs, the damage to the city had been slight.

After breakfast I drove to the Skyline Club. It was on the lake, at the eastern fringe of the city, in a wooded rolling section of walled estates, green lawns, swimming pools and tennis courts. From a mile away I could see the big low-roofed clubhouse against the sky, and I thought it was well-named. When I was closer, I saw that it was built of sandstone and lacquered pine logs. It glinted in the sun, on a

bluff above the trees, with blue sky beyond. A small elegant sign with a wrought iron frame stood up delicately from the clipped grass of the roadside: *Skyline Country Club. Private. Members Only.* An asphalt drive curved gracefully away from the road and up the bluff.

I TURNED at the sign and drove upward through pine woods until I came to a stone archway with a small gatehouse beside it that looked like a sentry box. A thin, elderly man in a pale blue shirt, black tie and a policeman's cap stepped out and lifted a hand. I stopped, and he came over to the car holding a red tag in his hand. A string was looped through a hole in the tag and the word GUEST was printed in large black letters. He handed me the tag, said, "Three dollars, please."

"Why?" I asked.

"So we can tell you paid," he said in a tired voice.

"Do members have to pay?"

He sighed deeply. "No, sir. Members are not required to pay. All events at the club are included in the membership."

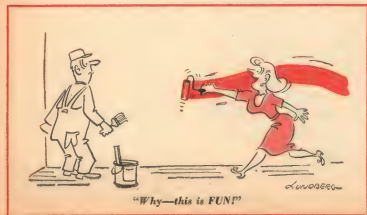
"How do you know I'm not a member?"

His tired old eyes moved, for just an instant, over my dusty and slightly battered car, and he said politely, "I've been on the gate here for ten years, sir. I know the members pretty well."

I gave him three dollars, stuck the red tag in the band of my hat, and drove on up the hill. The pine woods thinned out, and I came to a vast parking area at one side of the clubhouse. At the edge of this area was an iron guard rail, painted white, to keep the members from driving over the bluff into Lake Erie. There were maybe fifty cars parked there, and I noted that many of them were older and more battered than mine. A number of persons were walking around wearing red tags. Non-members, the common public, who had paid to see the golf tournament.

At close range, the clubhouse was a vast building, low and sprawling, with a long screened porch. The eighteenth green was directly across the drive, and just beyond was the caddy house and the first tee. A string of caddies were waiting in line, and a crowd stood around the tee. I heard the clean crack of a club head against a ball. A murmur of admiration went up from the spectators. They began to move along the edge of number one fairway behind a guard rope.

I saw Buzz De Voe talking to a tall young man with blond, sun-bleached hair. I went up to them, and Buzz turned and grinned at me. "Morning, Lee." He was a short fat man, about



40, addicted to violent sport jackets. "Lee," he said, "this is Jerry Conlon, the pro here."

I shook hands with Conlon, who said, "Well, I gotta get the next one started." He nodded at me and strode up to the tee. Far down the fairway I saw the silver flash of a club in the sun and the white gleam of a soaring ball.

"Buzz," I said, "do you know a man named Eric Bonner?"

"Bonner? I've met him a few times. His old man left him a factory. He plays hard, I hear, but he seems okay—no better and no worse than any of us would be, if we had his money. He's got a nice wife, too. Why?"

"I'll tell you later." I touched the red tag in my hat band. "Will this get me inside the clubhouse?"

"They can't do any more than throw you out." He squinted at me in the bright sunlight. "Don't tell me you're tailing Bonner—or his wife?"

"Not yet."

"Maybe I'd better go with you," he said. "Mrs. Bonner is very attractive. When Eric drinks himself to death, or gets shot by some outraged husband, his wife will come into a pile of money. Eric, the last of the Bonners." He paused and then said firmly, "I think I will go with you. It sounds like much more fun than this golf game."

"There's no story in the Bonners," I told him. "Anyhow, not a sports story."

"You never know," he said, laughing.

"I'll see you," I said, moving away.

"Sure, Lee."

I WALKED ACROSS the drive to the clubhouse. The long porch was deserted. I opened a screen door and stepped into dusky coolness. On my right was a huge dining room where a crew of white-uniformed girls were setting tables. On the opposite side of the entrance was a long room furnished as a lounge. An old white-haired Negro was moving slowly about emptying and cleaning ash trays. He didn't look at me.

Straight ahead was a short hall with a tiled floor. A small sign said, *Tap Room*. I walked across the hall and found myself in a room filled with heavy oaken tables surrounded by oaken arm chairs. A vast window in one wall faced the lake and sky, and a heavy polished bar curved across one corner. I moved over to it.

A young man in a crisp, white jacket was emptying ice cubes into a freezing unit. He straightened up and adjusted a black tie. "Good morning, sir." His gaze flicked to the red tag in my hat. He had a smooth, tanned face and intelligent eyes.

"Could I have a glass of ginger ale—plain?"

"Certainly." Swiftly he poured the drink and placed it before me.

I laid a dollar on the bar. He returned fifty cents. I removed my hat, sipped the ginger ale, and said, "Is Eric Bonner around this morning?"

"I don't believe so." He began to slice a lemon. I drank more ginger ale.

Presently I asked, "Have you seen Mr. Bonner lately?"

He looked up. "Mr. Bonner is a friend of yours, sir?" He spoke politely, but there was a glint of mockery in his eyes.

I suppressed a desire to slap him and said cheerfully, "I don't even know him. I asked you if he was here."

"He seldom comes in before noon," He gazed at me gravely, and added, "I believe that the players are teeing off, sir."

"I believe they are, too. Have you seen Mr. Bonner since last Saturday night?"

"No, sir."

"Were you working last Saturday night?"

"I work every Saturday night."

"There was a dance here then. Do you remember seeing Mr. and Mrs. Bonner at the dance? And Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Jaeger?"

"I don't remember, sir." His eyes were cool and level.

I sighed, took a five-dollar bill from my pocket, and laid it on the bar.

"Now, look, sonny, I just want to know if Mr. and Mrs. Bonner, and Mr. and Mrs. Jaeger, were at the dance, and if Mr. Jaeger and Mrs. Bonner were here in the bar until the dance was over—apparently waiting for Mrs. Jaeger and Mr. Bonner to show up. Did you happen to notice anything like that?"

He looked at the bill, and he didn't say anything.

"I won't tattle on you," I said softly.

He picked up the five, and said in an oddly tired voice, "Yes, that's right Mr. Jaeger and Mrs. Bonner waited until I closed the bar, and then they left together. Mrs. Jaeger and Mr. Bonner never showed up. Other members were, well, kidding them about it." He turned away and began to scoop cracked ice into a large silver bucket.

"Thanks," I said.

"Police?" he asked in a low voice.

"Now, why do you ask that?"

He shrugged. "I've had the law here before—when some of the members have been indiscreet." He paused, and then added with a trace of bitterness, "I hate this job."

"There are other jobs."

"I know. But the pay is fair here, with the tips, and I can't work in a

factory. I can't take a chance on hurting my hands."

I looked at his hands. They were long-fingered, with blunt nails.

He caught my glance, and said, "If I make enough money this summer, I'll be able to finish medical school. I want to do surgery."

"I see," I said.

"I'm a little old to be graduating, but the Army put me back."

"Korea?"

He nodded gloomily. "And Japan."

I smiled at him. "You'll make it, Doc. After you hang out your shingle, I'll see you when I get a cold, and you can charge me three dollars for six pink aspirin tablets."

"Thank you, sir." He smiled, even with his eyes, and laid the five on the bar. "No. Buy better keep this."

"No. Buy a thermometer, or a scalpel, or something. So Mrs. Bonner and Mr. Jaeger were the last to leave?"

He stopped smiling, and said soberly, "It's not for me to talk about the members. The club pays me, and as long as they pay me I owe them a little loyalty. What goes on here is the club's business. Anyhow, I've told you what you wanted to know."

"Yes," I admitted, "and if it will make you feel any better, you didn't tell me anything I didn't know. I was just checking."

"I hope you understand," he said. "I need the money, but I want to keep my job here."

"You'll keep it—and I'll bet you'll make a good doctor."

"Maybe—if I ever graduate." He hesitated. "Then you're not a policeman?"

"Did you ever see a cop pay for information?" I took out my wallet and showed him my license card. "The five was mostly for you to forget that I talked to you."

"I've forgotten."

"What's your name?"

"Dave Ryan."

"David Ryan, M.D.," I said, smiling. "Practice limited to surgery."

His eyes grew bright, and he grinned at me. "Don't ever ask me to hush up a bullet wound."

"I'll know better. Good-by, Doc."

"Good-by."

At the door I turned and glanced back. He was gazing down at the five-dollar bill as if it were thirty pieces of silver.

The weary-eyed man on the gate had no scruples at all. For a dollar bill he told me that Mrs. Eric Bonner drove a new cream-colored convertible, that her husband drove a big red sedan, also new. He freely informed me that he had been on duty the previous Saturday night, the night of the dance, and that Mrs. Bonner

and Mr. Jaeger had been the last to leave the club grounds—in Mrs. Bonner's car. He had positively not seen Mr. Bonner leave, or his car, either, although Mr. Bonner had driven it to the club early Saturday afternoon. He also told me that the drive was the only exit to the club—unless one walked through the pine woods down to the road. Could he have missed seeing Mr. Bonner leave? Maybe. Around one o'clock in the morning, when most of the dance crowd had left, he had sneaked a cup of coffee in the kitchen, but he hadn't been away from his post for more than five minutes.

I said, "Thanks," and drove down through the woods to the outside world. It was a little after ten in the morning. I drove slowly, looking for a turn-off which would take me to the lake highway where the motels were, the tourist courts and the small towns with hotels. I didn't have much hope, but I felt, since Mrs. Bonner was paying me, that I should go through the motions. Eric Bonner and Angeline Jaeger were no doubt together, but they'd been together for three days and nights. The gate man had probably missed them when they drove away from the Skyline Club during the dance, and they could be six states away, or holed up right under my nose.

I CAME to an intersection, with woods on both sides of the road, and pulled over and stopped. The road was deserted in the morning sunlight. I thought I heard a car approaching from behind me, but when I looked back the road was empty to a curve a quarter of a mile back. I lit a cigarette and tried to plan a course of action. From the woods beside me I heard birds calling. And then the birds were suddenly silent. I turned my head slowly in the silence, and it was then that I heard the flat sharp report. Something sighed through the open windows of my car, a wicked whisper, almost brushing my face, and then it was gone.

I jerked my head backward, realizing with a sense of shock that the bullet had been close, that it was gone now, lost in the woods across the road. I fell sideways on the seat and I lay there, huddled, sweating, waiting for the second shot. But there was nothing.

From somewhere, far away, I heard the sound of a car motor, and I raised my head. Behind me the road was still empty, and the woods were quiet, a soft breeze gently blowing the leaves. The sound of the car died away beyond the curve, and the birds began to call again. I got out and walked back into the woods. I didn't see anything but trees and grass and bushes,

the spotted sunlight. I thought of the sound of the car driving away, and I went back to my own car and sat behind the wheel. My hands were trembling a little.

Death had brushed me, and I was afraid.

AFTER a while, the fear receded a little, and in its place was anger, almost a rage. I thought of the note under my door, and of what had happened since I'd talked to Mrs. Bonner the afternoon before. I'd accepted a job, and somebody had tried to kill me, to keep me from learning what had happened to Eric Bonner and Angeline Jaeger. It wasn't a pleasant thing to know, but I suddenly knew that I was going to finish the job, even if Mrs. Bonner didn't pay me, no matter what.

I started my car and drove slowly to the lake highway. Almost immediately I spotted a place called the Lake Vista Cottages. I went to work.

For maybe five miles along the lake I checked the motels and the tourist courts. I didn't keep track of how many. Nobody had seen a man and woman answering the descriptions of Eric Bonner and Angeline Jaeger. Nobody, it seemed, had laid eyes on a new red sedan. It was as if red sedans had stopped traveling on all the roads in America. I stopped once for a sandwich and coffee, and, at three o'clock, I admitted the futility of it and headed back for the city.

It was after four when I turned into the drive at 1524 Wyandot Place. A cream-colored convertible was parked beside the house. I swung off into a turn-around before a tiled terrace and stopped. There was a smooth lawn before the brick-and-glass bungalow, a small stoop with a brass knocker on a white door, an appropriate amount of clipped shrubbery. Two tall maples stirred gently in a breeze from the lake. I got out and walked along the drive. The convertible's top was down and Lillian Bonner's straw purse lay on the red leather of the front seat. I turned and was moving for the front door when I heard the sound of voices.

I changed my course, walked to a corner of the house and saw a long sloping lawn, a white, frame, two-car garage, a sun dial, an umbrella table with four chairs around it, a medium-sized swimming pool. A tall green hedge beyond the pool divided the Bonner lot from the one adjoining, and provided a fair amount of privacy. A man and woman sat side by side on the edge of the pool with their feet in the water. They were facing me. The woman was Mrs. Bonner. A white two-piece bathing suit covered maybe one tenth of her tanned body. I didn't know the man. He was

young, with blond hair worn in a stiff brush cut. His chest was broad and bronzed, and his muscular thighs bulged from his black trunks. He had an arm around Mrs. Bonner and was leaning toward her. She was twisting away, her face averted. The man laughed and tried to pull her to him. She squirmed away and stood up, a graceful, long-legged figure on the edge of the pool. The man grabbed for her ankles, but she stepped quickly away and I heard her speak sharply.

I moved across the lawn. A portable bar stood beside the umbrella table, and I saw the glint of moisture on a silver cocktail shaker. Mrs. Bonner and the man saw me at the same time. She waved, and called, "Mr. Fiske." The man pushed himself to his feet and stood staring.

I skirted the edge of the pool and went up to them. Mrs. Bonner said, "How nice. Mr. Fiske, this is Ralph Jaeger."

He stepped forward eagerly and grasped my hand in a hearty grip. "Glad to know you," he said enthusiastically. He had a handsome boyish face, strong white teeth, a short blunt nose, a jutting chin. His eyes, gray and wide apart, held a flat expressionless look, even when he smiled. On his chest was a blue tattoo of a bosomy mermaid. Another tattoo, an anchor with *R.F.J.* above it, was needed into a muscular forearm.

He released my hand, said, "Pretty hot, huh?"

"Yes." I looked at Lillian Bonner. "Could I speak to you a moment?"

"Of course—and don't mind Ralph. He's Angie's husband."

Ralph said, "So you're the man Lilly hired to find them?"

I nodded.

His face took on a hurt expression. "Eric shouldn't have done that. I thought he was my friend. I never thought that he and Angie—" He shook his head sadly.

Mrs. Bonner said to me, "Did you find them?"

"Yes," Ralph said eagerly. "Where are they?"

"I didn't find them," I said to Mrs. Bonner. "It's more than a one-man job. I'll continue to work on it, if you wish, but it may take some time—and it'll be expensive. To operate effectively, I'll have to put on some extra men. You'd better notify the police. That will be best, from your viewpoint."

She frowned. "You mean you don't want to do it?"

"No. I'll be glad to continue. I just wanted to tell you the situation before I proceed any further. The cost—"

"Never mind the cost," she said, impatiently. "I don't want the police."



Lillian Bonner made a kind of small moaning sound in her throat and went to meet him. As they embraced, I saw Ralph's face over her shoulder. His eyes were squeezed shut and his mouth worked convulsively, like a baby crying. I got up, feeling embarrassed, and went to my car.

She paused, and a bewildered look crept into her eyes. "Where *are* they. Where could they have gone. And why?"

"I told you why," Ralph blurted. "Eric got Angie drunk and took advantage of her, and now he's ashamed to bring her back. He's your husband, Lilly, but if I had him here, I'd—" He smacked a big fist into a palm. "I don't blame Angie too much—it's Eric's fault. When I think of Eric and Angie—"

"Oh, shut up," Lillian Bonner said crossly. "He's my husband. And when they show up, I want you to behave yourself."

"Angie is my wife," he said hotly. "How do you think I feel?"

Lillian Bonner gazed at him with distaste, and I said to him, "You didn't seem too worried about your wife a few minutes ago." It wasn't a well-bred thing to say, but I'd said it, and I didn't worry about it.

His eyes narrowed. "Well, well," he said softly. "A damned Peeping Tom." He took a menacing step toward me. "Lilly and I are old friends."

"Apparently," I said.

"I resent that," he said, like a char-

acter in a high-school play. "I demand an apology."

"Oh, nuts," I said.

He balled a fist and swung at me. But he was slow and off balance. I lifted a foot and kicked him in the stomach. He went backward into the pool, making a tremendous splash. Lillian Bonner laughed suddenly, and then composed her face. Ralph came to the surface, sputtering and blowing water, and scrambled out of the pool. He started for me blindly. I braced myself.

"Ralph!" Lillian Bonner said sharply.

He stopped suddenly, slipping on the wet tile, and stared at her blankly. "Behave," she said coldly. "Grow up. Mr. Fiske is trying to help us."

"But he said—"

"Never mind," she snapped. "It's time for you to go to work."

"I don't feel like working," he said plaintively. "With Angie gone, and all—"

"Ralph," she said in a gentler voice, "there's nothing you can do. I'll let you know as soon as they're found, or come home. Then we'll decide what we're going to do. I haven't made up my mind about Eric,

and you'd better think it over about Angie. I'll call you tomorrow."

"Oh, all right," he said petulantly, "but this guy hasn't any right to make remarks—"

"I apologize to Mrs. Bonner," I said. "Thank you," she said dryly.

Ralph glared at me, and then walked away toward the house.

Lillian Bonner sighed. "Don't mind Ralph," she said.

"I don't. It just seems to me that he's—not quite your type."

She smiled. "I assume you mean that as a compliment?"

"Yes."

SHE lifted her smooth shoulders. "Angie is married to Ralph, and she's my best friend—was." She smiled bleakly. "Eric's been nice about Ralph, for my sake, and Angie's. We've included them in parties and dinners, like last Saturday night, and Eric arranged a job for Ralph at the plant. He's an assistant supervisor, or something, on the second shift. When he married Angie, he was just out of the Navy and driving a beer truck, I believe, and—oh, the hell with it." She brushed a wisp of blond hair back from her smooth forehead,

and smiled at me. "You're not interested in the Bonner's social problems." "Just their marital problems," I smiled, too. It was easy to smile at her. "Is Ralph a member of the Sky-line Club?"

"No. He and Angie go out with us, as guests."

"He looks real nice in swim trunks." "A healthy animal," she said, a trifle bitterly. "Would you like a drink, Mr. Fiske?"

"Yes," I said, which was the truth.

"I made some martinis," she said, "just before Ralph showed up, a little while ago. I didn't want to offer him any, before he went to work. They're probably half ice water by now. Want to take a chance?"

"Sure," I said, and I followed her across the lawn in the yellow sunlight to the umbrella table. She walked with a smooth, long-legged stride, aware of her attractions, and also aware that I was observing them. We sat by the table and she poured the martinis into small metal cups. I sipped mine. It was very dry and very cold, and I didn't mind the slight dilution.

She lit a cigarette and crossed her slim, tanned legs. "It's lonesome around here without Eric," she said. "He's a devil, but I miss him. I'm glad you came."

I murmured something polite and senseless, and she said, in a brooding voice, "He's been gone before, of course, but he always came home in the morning, or sometime the next day. Usually I overlooked it. After all, you can't have everything." She gazed at the smooth lawn, the swimming pool, the two-car garage, the new convertible in the drive, at the trim, attractive house, and there was a glow of pride in her eyes.

"Everything has a price tag," I said, realizing that it was not a particularly brilliant remark.

"I know," she said. "I know it very well. I suppose I'd better divorce him when he does show up. Pride is something I thought I had forgotten, but I guess I still have a little. If it had just been anyone but Angie—"

I GUESS there is a mean streak in me. I said, "Then back to the beauty shop?"

She looked at me quickly, a sudden cold hardness in her brown eyes. "Not if I can prove desertion," she said in a flat, level voice. "Hasn't he deserted me?"

"Yes. Temporarily, at least."

"And infidelity? What about that?"

Before I could answer, I heard a car door slam behind me, and the sound of a motor starting. I turned in my chair and gazed back at the drive. Ralph Jaeger was backing the cream-colored convertible out to the street.

Lillian Bonner said, "I told him to drive my car to work. He has a car of his own, but it's pretty old, and he told me it's being repaired this afternoon." She poured martini into our cups.

"Let him get to work the best way he can."

"I suppose you're right," she said. "Maybe you've got a mother complex," I said. "For your friend, Angelina, and Ralph, too."

She gazed at me soberly over her cup. "Do I look like a mother?"

"Not Ralph's mother."

"He's Angie's husband," she said. "She's younger than I am, and perhaps I do feel—felt—a little like a mother to her. I guess that's what's so hard about this."

I said, "I can understand that," and we talked for a time about Angelina and their dreary years in the beauty shop, and the eventual marriages to Eric Bonner and Ralph Jaeger. The shadows grew longer on the velvet lawn, and at last I said, "Were they drinking a lot—before they left the dance?"

"I'm afraid so. Eric usually drinks a lot, and so does Angie—when she has a chance—but she can't drink. She never could. After a few she just goes out—boom. I—I'm afraid she'd make Eric poor company." She smiled wryly.

Inside the house a telephone began to ring. Lillian Bonner said, "Excuse me," and walked up to the house with her graceful stride. The screen door slammed behind her.

I finished my drink, lit a cigarette, and gazed up at the sky. Red-tinted clouds were banked out over the lake, and the sun was an orange ball above the housetops. A warm breeze was blowing, gentle now after the tornado, and it fanned my face and rippled the surface of the swimming pool.

There was a slight sound behind me, and I turned to look up at the house. Lillian Bonner was standing on the back steps; her body golden in the lowering sun. Something in the stiff way she stood made me get up and go to her. She was crying silently, the tears wet on her cheeks.

"They've found Angie," she said. "She's—dead."

Angie was just a name to me, and a photograph. I felt no shock—only surprise and a sudden curiosity. "I'm sorry."

"Poof little Angie," she said brokenly.

"Who found her?"

"She stared at me blankly. 'What?'"

"Who found her? And where?"

She brushed a hand across her eyes, moved slowly down the steps. "Give me a moment," she said. I followed her to the table. She picked up her cup and emptied it. Her hand

trembled, and she avoided my gaze. "Do—do you have a cigarette?" she asked.

I gave her one, lit it for her. She inhaled deeply and gazed at the pool. "I suppose *he's* dead, too," she said in a low voice.

I waited.

Presently she sighed, tossed the cigarette to the grass, where it smoldered slowly. Watching the spiral of smoke, she said, "One of the men from the plant called me—they'd been trying to locate Ralph. He reported for work just as they called me, and he's gone to—to identify her. Some boys found her on the beach somewhere. She was wearing a wrist watch with her name engraved on the back—I gave it to her last Christmas."

"No sign of Eric?"

She shook her head slowly. "No. They said the tornado killed her. God knows where they were last night when it struck them, but they *must* have been together."

"Yes," I said, and I stood up.

"Don't go," she said quickly. "Please." The tears in her brown eyes made them seem almost black beneath the wet lashes.

I SAT down again. She lifted the shaker and filled our cups. The sun made a pleasing glow on her bare shoulders. I said, "Where on the beach did they find her?"

"I don't know. Does it matter?"

"No, I guess not," I said, and we sat and drank and talked in low tones. The sun sank lower and the air turned faintly cool. She told me, without bitterness, of her life with Eric Bonner. Some of it was pleasant, much of it was not. I listened without comment. She seemed to want to talk. Once she cried a little. "Maybe they'll find him," she said. "I—I kind of hope they won't. I'd like to remember him as he was. He—he was nice, in many ways, and I suppose I loved him. Maybe he even loved me. At first, anyhow. And it was a new world for me, a wonderful world. I wanted Angie to share it, and—"

A car came up the drive and stopped. I looked around. Ralph Jaeger was getting out of Lillian Bonner's cream convertible. He came toward us, walking slowly and rather jerkily. He was wearing a tan gabardine suit and a dark-green sport shirt. Lillian Bonner made a kind of small moaning sound in her throat and tried to meet him. As they embraced, I saw Ralph's face over her shoulder. His eyes were squeezed shut and his mouth worked convulsively, like a baby crying.

I got up and moved past them, feeling embarrassed. They paid no attention to me, and I went to my car, parked in the turn of the drive, and

drove out to the street. I didn't look back. I was remembering the wicked whisper of a bullet brushing my face.

Lillian Bonner had hired me to find her wayward husband, who was missing with another man's wife. I hadn't found them, but the tornado had, at least the wife. When last seen she had been with the husband. Where was he now? Floating in the lake, swept out by the tornado's fury? Lying twisted and battered along a rocky beach? Hanging in the ripped branches of a tree?

Four days had passed since Angeline Jaeger had walked off a dance floor with Eric Bonner. The tornado had struck last night. Where had they been in the meantime? Apparently, they hadn't been far away—at least, Angeline hadn't. I thought of the places I'd checked during the day. No one had seen a couple in a new red sedan, a man in a blue suit and girl in a gray print dress and red shoes. The gate man at the Skyline Club hadn't seen Eric Bonner's car leave, although he'd seen it come in. It was true that the gate man had admitted leaving his post for a few minutes around one o'clock in the morning. What time had Eric and Angeline turned up missing? My mind reversed slowly, trying to recapture Lillian Bonner's words the previous afternoon. . . .

We all drank too much, I'm afraid, and Eric danced with Angie a lot. Then, around eleven o'clock, they just disappeared. . . .

I thought about that a while, as I bucked the evening traffic, and suddenly I was certain that Eric had not driven his car out of the gate with Angeline. That meant that Eric had not left the club grounds—at least, not in his own car.

Lillian Bonner hadn't fired me, and she hadn't told me to stop working. But she would have to pay me for this day anyhow, and something was prodding me, stirring my brain with a tiny devil's fork, and I still remembered the bullet. Far on the east side of town I found a cross street, and I swung away from the zooming cars. In twenty minutes I was in the quiet of the country on the road leading to the Skyline Club. At a roadside tavern, I had two barbequed beef sandwiches and a glass of milk, which effectively removed the faint fuzziness resulting from Lillian Bonner's martinis. There was a phone booth in the place, and I called the central police station and asked for Sergeant McAllister, of Homicide. The cop on the desk told me he'd gone home, and I called there. When McAllister answered, he sounded as if he were chewing on something.

"Mac, this is Lee Fiske. What

about a young woman found dead on the beach? A tornado victim?"

"Had a report on it. Accidental death. Doc Shayne handled it. I'm eating my dinner."

"What did Shayne say?"

"How the hell do I know? Ask him."

"I will. Thanks, Mac."

"To hell with you. When we gonna have another poker game?"

"Never. I'm tired of watching you fill inside straights. To hell with you, too."

He guffawed and hung up.

I called the home number of Dr. Lewis D. Shayne. He was eating dinner, too, but he was more cordial than McAllister. Doctors, I suppose, are more accustomed to having their meals interrupted. "Doc," I said, "I hear they found a woman this afternoon, dead."

"What woman? I've had three corpses today, all women. One died drunk in an alley, one died in bed with the gas turned on, one they found along the lake."

"What about her? The last one?"

"Nothing about her. The tornado got her, that's all. She was pretty well banged up. Her husband identified her—name of, let's see—sounded something like that English car—"

"Jaeger?"

"That's it."

"Did you do an autopsy?"

"Autopsy? Hell, no. No bullet holes, no knife wounds, and she didn't drown. Lee, if I did a post on every dead body they find in this town I'd need sixteen more assistants. If you want to see her, she's at a mortuary on the corner of—"

"No," I said, thinking that there was nothing I could do for Angeline Jaeger now, or for Eric Bonner, either. What they had done was done, and their troubles were over. I wondered when and where they would find Eric's body. "Thanks," I said, and hung up.

I went out to my car and sat behind the wheel. The sun was almost down now, a burning disc on the far edge of the lake. I thought of all the

THE CASE OF THE UNHUNCHED HUNCHBACK

■ One of the oddest trials of all time did not occur in New York or Chicago or Paris or some place like that, as you might think, but in the tiny principality of Monte Carlo.

That's the place with the famous casino, of course, and a hunchbacked figure who'd become a hanger-on there was arrested.

The charge? That he really didn't have a hump in his back!

You see, in the casinos of Europe hunchbacks have long been considered a symbol of good luck, no doubt a hold-over from the time when dwarfs, hunchbacks and such were kept by kings as their jesters, for purposes of creating merriment.

Anyway, it was the custom of the patrons of this casino to touch the "hunchback's hump" before they went to the table to bring their play. They nearly always handed the "hunchback" a coin or two for this privilege and, if they were lucky enough to win, they generally rewarded him with a much tidier reward.

Andre Peligmon, for such was the name of the "hunchback," prospered, never playing the tables himself but invariably profiting when somebody did have a good night.

Well, you can imagine the chagrin when, one evening, Andre Peligmon stumbled down a flight of stairs in the main hall, his coat split open and with it the revelation that the "hump" was really a bundle of wool!

The irate casino management promptly had him arrested, but the goarled little man stoutly declared he had practiced no deception.

He pointed out that he never had actually told anyone he was hunchbacked—a statement which could not be refuted. Also he'd never asked for any money from anyone, they had given it to him voluntarily.

Furthermore, argued Andre Peligmon, who could prove that a hump made out of wool wasn't as lucky as any other kind?

The judge sighed.

There was nothing to do but turn Andre loose.

—Harold Helfer

things that had happened, and I turned them over, one by one, in my mind. Presently I started the motor and drove to the Skyline Club.

The same gate man was still on duty. "You again," he said in a tired voice.

"Is my ticket still good?"

"I guess so—but the tournament's over."

"Quite a storm we had last night," I said. "Lucky it missed the city. Where did it hit, anyhow?"

He waved an arm in the direction of the lake. "Over there, someplace, north of the course. It's just wilderness all along there, with the cliff and the rocky shore, and all. Not good for anything. Can't even get ashore from the lake side, and from this side the pines grow up the bluff so high you can't see the bottom. A few years back the club figured on making a yacht basin there—it's on their property—but it was too expensive, with the fill and the dredging, and they gave it up, after putting in a temporary road back to the cliff. I've lived around here for thirty years, and no human ever got down into the valley between the cliff and the shore. It was sure lucky the twister hit there, away from everything like it is. The coast guard saw it from out in the lake—where it hit, I mean—but they didn't try to get in. No reason, and too risky. Them tornadoes just make a clean sweep. Freakish, too. I got a brother out in Iowa, in tornado country, and he told me—"

"Yes," I said. "See you later." I drove away, feeling a mixture of depression and a kind of wild excitement.

I reached the crest of the drive and saw the lake, smooth and deep blue, and dappled with red sun glints. As I passed the clubhouse, I saw that people were eating on the long, screened porch. More people were walking from their cars to the clubhouse, gay women with bare, tanned shoulders and laughing men in white dinner jackets, all on their way to cocktails and dinner and witty or banal conversation. A casual, happy-on-the-surface crowd, all with the pleasant bond of belonging to the Skyline Club. A woman laughed, and a car horn sounded a musical note.

It was the sundown hour at the Skyline Club, and I left it all behind me, the mad, gay whirl, and I passed the caddy house and the first tee and followed a narrow road running along the golf course. It was a snaky road, winding in and out to avoid greens and bunkers and sections of smooth fairway. At intervals were small sheds which housed, I guessed, the mowers and rollers and tractors and all the equipment needed to maintain a deluxe lay-out in perfect condition. Sev-

eral times the road curved close to the edge of a deep ravine clogged with greenery, and it kept climbing and twisting, and at last, through the trees, I saw the lake again.

The road made a circle here, winding back upon itself, through thick pine woods, darkening now, and a narrower road, more like an abandoned lane, led away from the circle and back through the trees toward the lake. There was room for only one car, and I drove slowly, leaving the golf course and civilization behind me, and I emerged at last in a small clearing. Before me the lake was a vast, liquid carpet, rolling gently and glinting red and blue as far as I could see in the last light of the setting sun.

I stopped the car and got out. The high grass was matted and blown flat by the swirling fringe winds of the tornado, but I could see the faint depressions made by the tires of a car to the very edge of the cliff. I walked to the brink and peered down. For a moment I felt dizzy at the immense

drop below me, and I thought that there should be some sort of guard rail here. Then I remembered that it was on private property, abandoned and unused. The dog-leg curve of number ten fairway was far behind me, back through the pines, and there was no sensible reason for any of the Skyline Club members to drive back here. But it was possible that my idea of a sensible reason would not agree with Eric Bonner's—not if he had the slim and brunette Angeline Jaeger on his mind.

I could picture them leaving the dance, giggling drunkenly at their audacity, and getting into Eric's red sedan and driving to this spot, far away from the clubhouse, to look at the moonlight on the water, gleaming bright as far as they could see, if they had bothered to look at the moonlight. If they had, it had been their last look at moonlight, or at anything on this earth. I knew this, because it was then that I saw the buzzards circling above the raw trail the tornado had left below. I gazed down-



I turned off the flash and froze. The dark, bulky figure of a man was standing in the doorway. The light gleamed dully on the gun in his hand. I remembered dimly that I didn't have one.

ward and, in the last light of the sun reflected in the shadow of the valley, I saw the smashed blood-red blot, the toy glitter of chrome and shattered glass which were the remains of Eric Bonner's car.

It was impossible to get down there without mountaineer's equipment. A helicopter could make it, now that a path was clear of towering trees. They would have to use a helicopter, I thought dismally, to get Eric's body, trapped in the car. There was no other way, not even from the lake. Angelina's body must have been thrown out in the crashing tumbling descent, and had later been snatched up by the tornado as it roared along the base of the cliff.

One of the buzzards, bolder than the rest, glided low over the car. The others barked eagerly with slanting pinions. I knew they had found Eric Bonner. I also knew that, if it had not been for the tornado, Eric and Angelina would have remained buried in a dense sea of trees and brush and smothering vines until the end of eternity.

I TURNED away from the brink, feeling faintly sick, and I peered down at the grass of the clearing in the dull yellow light, the last light before dusk, and I saw what I was looking for—the almost invisible tracks where a car had circled and gone back toward the clubhouse. I stared at the returning tracks a long time, and, at last, I drove back, too, along the dark, almost forgotten road through the pines, to the hard-packed road fringing the golf course.

When I passed the clubhouse I heard music and laughter, and I saw the lights and the people and the rows of bright new cars. I thought of the bartender, Dave Ryan, and I hoped he would make enough money to finish medical school. On the curving descent, the old man at the gatehouse lifted a hand as I passed, and I drifted on down through the pine woods to the highway.

It was almost nine o'clock, and full dark, when I reached Lillian Bonner's house.

I drove past slowly. The cream convertible was not in the drive, but there were a few lights in the house, not many, and they glowed yellowly behind closed Venetian blinds. I parked a half block away, beneath a spreading maple, took a small flashlight from the dash compartment, and walked back. The few houses I passed were far apart, all neat and well kept, each with its television antenna. Houses of brick, of stone, of wood, with bright awnings and screened porches and tiled terraces. There were lights in most of them, and cars in the black-top drives. Two houses

from Lillian Bonner's, a man was sitting on his front steps swiveling spray from a hose nozzle over his lawn.

"Good evening," he said pleasantly. "Hot, isn't it?"

"Yeah, hot," I mumbled. I kept going and I didn't look back, but I sensed his mildly curious gaze upon me as I reached Lillian Bonner's house and crossed the lawn to the front door. Through the screen I saw a reflected glow of light in a small entrance hall. There was no movement, and no sound. I watched and listened a moment, and then moved over the grass to the drive. The moon was still low, but its faint light showed me the empty drive and the pale outline of the rear of the cream convertible, nosed into almost the exact center of the two-car garage. It was an inconsiderate way to park, I thought, with no room on either side for a second car to get in.

I moved slowly back toward the garage. The smooth water of the swimming pool reflected a scattering of stars. Then I remembered the umbrella table, and I had a sudden feeling that she might be there. I stood still a moment, knowing that I had carelessly exposed myself. Then I moved forward boldly, expecting to hear her voice. But I was lucky. She wasn't sitting at the table. I moved past it, skirted one end of the pool, and entered the warm darkness of the garage. I felt better then, and gazed back up at the house. It was just the same; no sound, no movement, and the kitchen was dark.

I WAITED for maybe two minutes, wishing I had a cigarette, but afraid to light one. From down the street a dog barked, and I heard the shrill faraway screams of playing children. I turned then, moved to the front of the convertible and turned my flashlight on the bright enamel and gleaming chrome. The car hadn't been washed lately; I saw the thin coating of dust and a few dead bugs plastered to the hood, grill and bumper. The bumper was slightly dented, and on the creamy curved surface of the left front fender there were several deep scratches. A few bright red flecks were imbedded in the paint.

Behind me a voice said sharply, "Hey! What're you doing in there?" I turned off the flash and froze. The dark bulky figure of a man was standing in the garage doorway. The moonlight glinted dully on the gun in his hand. I remembered dismally that I wasn't carrying a gun.

I said, "Hello, Ralph." He leaned forward, trying to peer into the darkness. When I moved toward him, he backed up a little. Then we were both standing in the moonlight with the pool beside us.

"Oh," he said. "Fiske. Is that the name?"

"Yes." "What's the idea? I was standing by the kitchen window, and I thought I saw somebody sneak into the garage."

I said, "Where did you get the gun?"

He gazed at the gun in his hand, as if he had forgotten he held it. It glittered silver in the moonlight, a small short-barreled weapon, about a .32, I guessed. "It's Eric's," he said. "He kept it in a drawer in the kitchen."

"Where's Mrs. Bonner?"

"Dressing. We're going over to the funeral home to—see about a casket for Angie." He turned away, brushing a hand over his eyes.

"I'm sorry," I said, and I looked up at the house. There was still no movement there, and the lights remained dim.

RALPH turned toward me. "You're not sorry," he said brokenly. "You—you didn't know Angie— What're you doing here, anyhow?"

"I was looking at Mrs. Bonner's car—the front end of her car."

He stared at me blankly.

"And I found Eric," I said. "He's dead, too."

His lips worked silently, as if he were repeating my words to himself. Then he said in a low voice, "The tornado got him, too? They were together?"

"Yes," I said gently.

"Where did you find him?"

"He's in his car, a red car, at the bottom of the cliff on the lake shore, north of the Skyline Club. The tornado went through there."

"Are—are you sure?"

"I couldn't get down to look, but I know he's there." I didn't want to tell him about the buzzards.

"Then they were in Eric's car—when it hit?"

"Maybe," I said, "but they died three days before, when Eric's car went over the cliff, the night of the dance. They never left the club grounds."

"That damned drunken Eric," he blurted. "He got Angie in his car and he was too drunk too see where he was going, and—"

"No," I broke in. "It wasn't an accident. Eric and your wife parked on the edge of the cliff, and somebody in another car came up behind them and pushed them over the edge. I saw the tire marks in the grass where it turned around and went back to the clubhouse."

"Who?" he asked hoarsely. "Who—would do a thing like that?"

"It was Mrs. Bonner's car," I said. "The front bumper is dented and

there are red particles on the fender—paint from Eric's car. The police laboratory will be able to match it."

He stared at me, his jaw slack.

"Take it easy, Ralph," I said. "It's a rough deal, but you may as well know about it now. Mrs. Bonner followed them when they left the dance. After they parked on the edge of the cliff, she drove up behind them and pushed Eric's car over the edge. It wouldn't be hard to do, even if Eric had the brake set, which I doubt. Then Mrs. Bonner returned to the clubhouse, certain that they would never be found, and she stayed with you until the dance was over."

"She waited three days, and then hired me—as a cover-up, so that, on the record it would appear that she really wanted to find them. But, right afterward, she got scared. She had murder on her conscience, and I might uncover something. So she wrote me a threatening note, trying to scare me off. It didn't work, and this morning she tried to shoot me, after she knew I'd been snooping around the Skyline Club."

"No, no," he whispered. "Not Lilly. She couldn't—"

"Why not?" I asked harshly. "She was jealous, maybe, and with Eric gone she'd get all his money." I paused, and then said in a gentler voice, "Is she really in the house, Ralph? Are you sure she's there?"

He seemed not to have heard me. "I can't believe it," he said slowly. "I didn't see any red paint on Lilly's car, and I put it in the garage tonight, too."

I started to speak, and then I stopped, suddenly shocked at what he had just said. His words seemed to hang, one by one, in the soft night air between us. I gazed at him standing there, and suddenly I felt a strange happiness, an odd sense of relief.

Ralph turned and stared at the house with a dumb look of misery. "She's there, all right," he muttered.

"Let's go talk to her—before we call the police."

He was silent for what seemed like a long time, and then I heard him sigh. The gun dangled in his fingers beside his right leg, and his heavy shoulders sagged. "I—I can't believe that Lilly—"

"I'll bet you can't," I said cheerfully, and I hit him with my fist on the left side of his jaw as hard as I could. He lurched sideways to his knees, the gun clattering to the tile beside the pool. I scooped up the gun and stepped back. I felt mean and happy at the same time. My knuckles hurt from hitting him, but it was a nice hurt. He shook his head slowly, and then slanted his gaze up to mine.

"That wasn't fair," he said in an outraged voice, and he crouched like a football guard on the fourth down. Maybe it was the moon, or the stars, but it seemed to me that something like a flame glowed in his eyes.

I cocked the revolver, for the effect the clicking sound would make. It scared him. He was afraid of the gun; it showed in the way he shrank back on his haunches.

"Of course it wasn't fair," I said to him. "Life is a rat race, and you're a rat, Ralph. You were willing to let Mrs. Bonner take the blame, but I know she had no part in it. If she had, she would never have told me that, at eleven o'clock, you went out to look for Angeline and Eric. If she had been mixed up in their deaths, she would not have wanted me to know that either of you had left the clubhouse. You followed them and pushed them over the cliff, with Mrs. Bonner's car, because you knew your wife was having an affair with Eric—

and you wanted Mrs. Bonner, anyhow. You saw your chance, and you shot for the stars—for Lillian Bonner, and the money she would get. Didn't you, Ralph?"

He made a sound, something like the growl of a small animal, but the gun in my hand kept him crouched on the tile.

"I really thought it was Mrs. Bonner," I said. "But I know now that she told you she had hired me, and it was you who wrote the note, in a weak desperate attempt to scare me off. Then you followed me and tried to kill me on the road out near the Skyline Club. You knew Mrs. Bonner was reluctant to tell the police, and I was your only threat. If I hadn't interfered, Eric and Angeline would have been gone forever, or, as it turned out, merely victims of the tornado, or careless driving. It didn't matter. Either way, they were gone."

He pushed himself slowly erect, watching me all the time, his head cocked a little on one side.

"And there's one thing more," I said wearily. "Tell me why you parked Mrs. Bonner's car in the middle of the garage, leaving no room for Eric's car, in case he should come back?"

"Listen," he said thickly, "you—" "It's a two-car garage, but you hogged it all, because you knew Eric wasn't coming back, ever. You were taking over here already."

I saw the sweat on his face glisten in the moonlight. "You can't prove anything," he said in a low voice.

"The police will, Ralph—once they start digging. It won't be hard to do. You'll crack easy."

Suddenly he began to cry, like a baby bawling over a broken wagon. I felt ashamed for him, even though I knew he was a baby, really, trying to get something that he wanted, reaching for the stars. And now he was caught and frustrated, denied his desires, and his reaction was primitive and infantile. He was a child in a man's body, who had learned how to dress and talk; he had been accepted as a man, but he never grew up.

He gazed at me hopelessly, tears on his contorted face. "Eric had everything," he said brokenly. "He had Lilly, and all that money. He even had Angie, too. It—it wasn't right, and I killed them both. They can't do anything to me. There's a law, the unwritten law, and I read up on it when I first found out that Angie was seeing Eric while I was working on the night shift. That's the reason he wouldn't give me a job in the daytime—he wanted the nights with Angie. Lilly knew about it, too, and she was wonderful to me, like a—like a—"



"When my time comes I hope I can go that way."

"Mother?" I said coldly.

"Why should Eric have Lilly?" he cried. "And his money, when I don't have anything? It—it's not fair—" He sighed forlornly, and turned away, his whole big body a picture of despair.

I relaxed a little, and it was a mistake. He whirled back toward me, smashed a shoulder into my chest and pinned my arms at my sides. I didn't have time to bring up the gun, and I dropped it when he struck me. We struggled backward, and he was grunting like a bull. He had a bull's strength, too, and I couldn't twist loose from his arms. Then the earth fell away and we were in the water at the deep end of the pool.

We went down, locked together, and there was no air in my lungs. Water gurgled against my ears, and I swallowed some. Panic struck me then; drowning is a hard way to die. I hunched my shoulders and kicked violently with my knees. We jacked-knifed backward, my body straining with fear. Abruptly, his hold loosened. I kicked free of him, and shot upward. The soft night air was like an angel's caress on my face. Three overhand strokes took me to the side of the pool. I scrambled out, feeling clawing hands at my heels. On the tile before me the gun glinted. I crawled sideways for it, like a crab, felt my wet fingers close over the cool steel. I swung around and raised the gun.

He was pulling himself out of the pool, his hands scrabbling along the edge. I smashed the flat side of the gun against his dripping head. The blow stopped all his motions instantly, and he began to slip back into the water. I grabbed one of his wrists, but he was too heavy to hold with one hand. I dropped the gun, got him beneath the arms, pulled him out and stretched him on the tile. I crouched beside him, panting and coughing, and still feeling the cold fear that had struck me in the water.

A door slammed, a faraway sound. I looked up toward the house, saw a slender figure crossing the lawn in the shadowy moonlight. "Ralph," Lillian Bonner called, "what are you doing? I've been waiting—" She saw us then, and stopped abruptly.

I stood up slowly, pushed the wet hair back from my eyes, and went to her. She was wearing a dark dress, the V of the neck black against her white throat. Her hair was like silver in the moonlight. She gazed at me soberly, her eyes luminous, and then tried to peer past me at the limp figure of Ralph Jaeger.

I touched her arm. Her skin was cool and soft beneath my fingers. The top of her sleek head was on a level with my chin. Slowly she turned her

head, and I almost winced at the brooding directness of her gaze. "What's wrong with Ralph?" she asked quietly.

"He'll be all right. Listen—Eric's dead, too." My fingers closed over her arm.

I felt her stiffen, and I heard her quick intake of breath, a soft sibilant sound. Slowly she came against me. "Hold me for a minute," she whispered. "Do you mind?"

I didn't mind, and I held her. Presently she pushed away from me, very gently, and I dropped my arms. "I—I'm all right now," she said. "I guess I've known it, since they found Angie. I knew they were together. The storm killed them both." She paused, and sighed. "Angie was my sister—my kid sister. She was always wild; after the folks died, I tried to look after her, and Ralph, too, when she married him. Maybe I should have told you. It was pride, I guess. After all, it's not nice to know that your sister is having an affair with your husband. I stood it a long time, but when they left the dance together, and didn't come back, that finished it for me. It—it was so—so brazen. Sometimes Angie would taunt me about Eric, but I couldn't hurt her. She never grew up, I guess."

"Like Ralph?"

She nodded. "He was her kind—until Eric came along." She took a step toward the pool. "Why is—"

I touched her arm, and she stopped. "He pulled me into the pool," I said. "I had to hit him. Your brother-in-law is out cold."

"You can't pick your relatives," she said bleakly. "He tried to make love to me, the stupid oaf. What happened?"

I told her about Ralph, about all of it.

She listened quietly, and when I had finished she gazed at Ralph. What I saw in her eyes made me shiver a little. "Go in the house," I told her. "Call the police. I'll watch him."

"Do I have to see him again?"

"No."

"Good," she said harshly, and she began to sob.

I put an arm around her waist and led her slowly across the lawn to the house. At the door she turned and brushed a hand over her eyes. "You handle it. I—I'll pay you. . . ."

"You don't have to pay me."

She touched my soggy sleeve. "You're soaking. I think Eric's clothes will fit you. He was a big man, too. What's your first name?"

"Lee."

"Stay a while, Lee, afterward. We'll have a drink and talk. I'd like to talk to someone. Maybe it would help."

"All right," I said, thinking that I wanted to stay, even in a dead man's clothes.

She turned and entered the house. I went back to Ralph. He was stirring a little. His eyes were open, staring blankly up at the night sky.

"Stars," he mumbled. "The stars up there. . . ."

"Forget the stars, Ralph," I said gently.



"Nothing serious. Try to keep him in bed. I'll give you something to take."

WHO'S ON



Which one of these gentlemen will be the first to argue with an umpire in 1954? The first to be thrown out of a game? For the complete details, see next page!

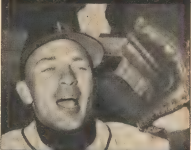


CASEY STENGEL

FIRST?



GEORGE "Birdie" TEBBETTS



EDDIE STANKY

You don't have to wait till the baseball season starts to find out. One look in the magic crystal ball, and you know everything that's going to happen from now till World Series time.

■ **By ROY MORIARTY**



In just a few weeks now, the cry of "Play ball!" will echo through the countryside, and once more baseball fans everywhere—*real* baseball fans—will be reading every line of the box scores and every item of even the minutest interest from the locker-rooms of the nation.

Who will pitch the year's first no-hitter? Who will be the first to bat into a triple-play? Who will have the honor of tearing the first ligament, being hospitalized for the rest of the season, or being shipped back to Little Rock for further seasoning?

These are the big questions to the baseball fan, and, even now, the aficionados sit poised before their sports extras waiting for opening day in another pennant season. But, you might ask, *why* should you wait? Why should you have to buy every newspaper every day and listen to every baseball broadcast, to be sure you haven't missed anything?

Why can't you, instead, find all the baseball news you want, gathered into one newspaper or magazine? More important, why should you have to wait until the end of the season to get your roundup of the year's top baseball news? Why can't you have it *now*?

The editors of *Bluebook* think you can, and they therefore have asked me to compile a digest of the 1954 baseball news just as it will happen between now and World Series time. This compilation follows. It may be slightly inaccurate here and there, but, for the most part, it will be found to be a true calendar of the coming season's events.

After all, how can I go far wrong? All I had to do was copy down the news exactly the way it happened in baseball every year since Abner Doubleday laid out his first diamond. So here it is. You can read it now, and then forget baseball for the rest of the year.

April 15th: The managers of all sixteen major-league teams announce that they are more than pleased with the results of spring training, that they are especially excited over the fine showing of a couple of their young rookies, and that the latter, combined with the nucleus of fine veterans to round out their teams, augurs an excellent chance for a pennant for their faithful fans.

April 16th: Leo Durocher announced that he is especially pleased with the showing of his young rookie first baseman, Roger Diffendorfer. "He reminds me of Lou Gehrig, when Lou first came up," Leo exulted.

April 17th: Walter Alston announced that he is excited especially over the work of the Dodgers' rookie first baseman, Gene Vestbuton. "I'm high on this kid," Walt said. "He reminds me of Bill Terry, when Bill first came up."

April 18th: Casey Stengel today lauded the fine work around the initial sack of his rookie first baseman, Tom Denture. According to "Ole Case," young Denture "reminds me of George Sisler, when he first came up."

April 19th: Whitey Lockman, who hasn't played much first base for the Giants this year, having been superseded by the sensational young rookie, Roger Diffendorfer, broke into the line-up today. He hit a double.

April 20th: Inserted as a pinch-hitter in the last of the 9th today, with the Dodgers trailing 3 to 1, Gil Hodges, whose first-base job had been taken away from him in spring training by young Gene Vestbuton, hit a triple with three on.

April 21st: After he'd made two errors in the first five innings, Tom Denture, whom Casey Stengel had been comparing with George Sisler, George Kelly, Lou Gehrig and Dolph Camilli, was taken out of the line-up in favor of Joe Collins.

April 24th: Fresh from a shut-out over the Cards, Robin Roberts, of the Phillies, today predicted he'd win 25 games this year.

April 26th: Carl Erskine, the Dodgers' only 20-game hurler last year, today blanked the Redlegs and immediately predicted he'd win at least 20 more games for the Bums this year.

April 28th: With his second victory of the season under his belt, Bob Lemon, of the Indians, today said he felt sure he'd win another 23 games for Cleveland this season.

May 1st: After the usual pre-season

juggling, Leo Durocher today announced that he was "set" with his current line-up for the remainder of the season.

May 2nd: The Giants today announced the release to Minneapolis, on 24-hour recall, of their sensational young rookie first baseman, Roger Diffendorfer.

May 4th: The Yankees today optioned Tom Denture to Kansas City. "He'll be back," Casey Stengel said. "By being in Kansas City, he'll have a chance to play every day."

May 7th: Gil Hodges was back in the line-up permanently at first base for the Dodgers today, and was batting at a snappy .405 clip. Whatever became of Gene Vestbuton?

May 12th: After juggling his line-up for the fifteenth time this season, Leo Durocher today announced that he was definitely "set" now for the rest of the season.

May 17th: After a sensational start in which they won seven of their first eight games, the Baltimore Orioles—formerly the St. Louis Browns—today dropped their third in a row to the New York Yankees. The score was 15 to 1.

May 24th: The Baltimore Orioles today announced the signing of veteran pitcher Bobo Newsom, who retired last fall after having played for virtually every other team in baseball in his long career on the mound. "He'll help us a lot," said Manager Jimmy Dykes.

May 27th: Alvin Dark was at first base today for the Giants, with Whitey Lockman playing left field. "Al's a natural first baseman," Manager Durocher said, "and this will give us more power from the right." He also announced that his line-up was set for this year.

June 2nd: The Tigers today started Bobo Newsom on the hill in the first game of a doubleheader. They'd signed the ancient Bobo as a free agent yesterday after the veteran had been released by the Baltimore Orioles.

June 5th: The Dodgers today announced the outright sale of Gene Vestbuton, a first baseman, to Toronto, of the International League, in exchange for cash and a player to be named later. Vestbuton had a trial at first for the Bums, but never showed enough to impress Manager Alston.

June 10th: After shifting Alvin Dark to left-field, Manager Durocher, of the New York Giants, announced that his line-up was set for this season.

June 18th: The Cincinnati Redlegs today acquired veteran pitcher Bobo Newsom via the waiver route.

June 23rd: There were rumors in Cincinnati today that the Redlegs were considering a new manager to replace Birdie Tebbetts. The Reds have lost their last five games.

June 28th: Eddie Stanky, of the Cardinals, today was fined \$200 and suspended for five days for his run-in with Umpire Lou Jorda.

June 29th: Leo Durocher was fined \$100 and given a stiff warning by Commissioner Frick today, after his run-in with Umpire Al Barlick. Questioned about the fracas by reporters, Durocher said, "My line-up is set for the season."

July 3rd: Bobo Newsom was signed today by the Milwaukee Braves as a relief pitcher.

July 7th: In answer to many rumors, Owner Horace Stoneham, of the Giants, today said there was no thought whatsoever of replacing Leo Durocher as manager of the stumbling Giants. "After all," Stoneham said, "he still has another year to go on his contract." For his part, Durocher announced that he at last had become set on his line-up for this season.

July 10th: Carl Furillo, of the Dodgers, who led the league in hitting last year, today reported early for extra batting practice. The veteran outfielder has been hitting this season at a measly .210.

July 14th: The Cincinnati Redlegs denied today the rumor that they were considering replacing Manager Birdie Tebbetts with the veteran pitcher, Bobo Newsom. "Birdie has done a wonderful job with the team," Business Manager Gabe Paul said. "We have every confidence in his ability to give Cincinnati fans a well-deserved pennant."

July 17th: With the shift of Alvin Dark to third base today, Manager Durocher, of the New York Giants, told reporters he felt he had hit on a winning combination for the Polo Grounders. "My line-up is set," he vociferated.

July 21st: The Philadelphia Athletics today signed veteran relief pitcher Bobo Newsom.

July 28th: Casey Stengel, Yankees manager, admitted today he was worried about Mickey Mantle's ailing knee. This is the knee the slugging centerfielder hurt three years ago, and it worries Manager Stengel every year. Last year he admitted being worried a day earlier than this year.

August 2nd: Owner Clark Griffith, of the Washington Senators, today announced that he would add 14 more night games to the Senators' schedule. Since the Senators now play all their 77 home games at night, it was presumed the 14 extra night games will be exhibition games.

August 5th: With an eight-game lead, Casey Stengel, of the New York Yankees, scoffed angrily at reporters who asked him his World Series plans. "So we've won five in a row," Case said. "You still aren't sure until the last out is made." He denied the re-

port he was considering signing Bobo Newsom as a bullpen pitcher.

August 7th: Stan Musial, of the St. Louis Cardinals, the perennial batting champion of the National League, said today he was worried about his hitting. He was down to .337.

August 13th: All of Milwaukee today was hailing Eddie Mathews, the Braves sensational third baseman, who was one home run ahead of Babe Ruth's record for 1927, the year the Babe hit the all-time high of 60.

August 16th: Alvin Dark was in right field today when the Giants took the field to play the Brooklyn Dodgers. "It's his natural position," Manager Durocher said, "enabling us to get set on a definite line-up."

August 21st: With two of his pitchers sidelined with ailing arms, Manager Phil Cavaretta, of the Chicago Cubs, today signed veteran pitcher Bobo Newsom to a Cub contract. "He'll help us a lot," Cavaretta told reporters.

August 24th: Leading by ten runs in the seventh inning, the Brooklyn Dodgers, who lead the National League by eight games, lost the second half of a double-header to the last-place Pittsburgh Pirates by a score of 12 to 10. A parade of six "pitchers" saw action for the Brooks.

August 26th: Playing his first game behind the bat as a catcher, Alvin Dark today led the New York Giants to their first victory in twelve starts. Dark collected a single, double and two triples to pace the Giant attack. "We're set now," Leo Durocher announced after the game.

August 29th: Paying him a bonus of \$250,000, plus a new car and a summer home for his family, the Pittsburgh Pirates today signed a sensational new rookie pitcher, Clyde Muscles, who celebrated his 12th birthday yesterday. Muscles will be the second youngest player on the Pirate squad, being two years older than their first baseman, John "Junior" Farheish.

September 2nd: Bobo Newsom, veteran pitcher, today was signed by the Boston Red Sox. "He'll help us a lot," said Manager Lou Boudreau.

September 4th: After going hitless his last 22 times at bat, Eddie Mathews today exploded for two home runs against the Brooklyn Dodgers, and the Milwaukee fans immediately hailed the brilliant young third baseman as another Ruth, and were sure he'd break the Babe's home-run record of 60 in a season.

September 6th: Alvin Dark today returned to the New York Giants after quitting the team in St. Louis because, he is alleged to have complained, Manager Durocher "tried to make a center-fielder out of me." For his part, Manager Durocher denied urging Dark to play anywhere except

"his normal position at short." "After all," Durocher said, "it will benefit the team when we can get our line-up set for the season."

September 9th: The Red Sox today sold Bobo Newsom to the Cardinals.

September 10th: Manager Walter Alston today charged the rival pitchers in the National League with "throwing at my players." If it continues Alston said, he will instruct his own hurlers to "stick it in their ears."

September 12th: Outfielder Carl Furillo, of the Brooklyn Dodgers, today took after Philadelphia Phillies pitcher Bobo Newsom with a bat after, he charged, Newsom had thrown at the Brooklyn star's head. The Phillies acquired Newsom yesterday from the St. Louis Cardinals.

September 13th: The Pittsburgh Pirates today were mathematically eliminated from any chance of winning this year's pennant.

September 15th: Manager Casey Stengel, in order to "get some insurance in his team's drive to their sixth straight American League pennant and World's Championship, today signed to Yankee contracts Wally Westlake, Jackie Robinson, Peanut Lowery, Hank Greenberg, Bob Feller, Mazy Marion, Rex Barney and Bobo Newsom. "They'll help us a lot," Stengel told the writers.

September 18th: Alvin Dark today pitched the first six innings in the Giant-Braves game and gave up eight hits. "He's a natural pitcher," Manager Durocher explained at Toots Shor's, where he watched the game on television.

September 20th: The Brooklyn Dodgers today clinched the National

League pennant for the third year in a row, and now will meet the World's Champion Yankees for the marbles in the World's Series. "We'll run them out of the park this time," Brooklyn Manager Walter Alston said.

September 22nd: In an experiment to give all his players a chance as managers, Leo Durocher today assigned Alvin Dark to the field generalship post in the final game of the season between the Polo Grounders and the Phillies. "Their line-up is all set now," said a Phillies fan.

September 24th: A New York columnist today criticized Manager Leo Durocher, of the New York Giants, for his failure to pick up Bobo Newsom during the late stages of the pennant drive. "He'd have helped the Giants a lot," the writer said, "and would have taken the strain off utility man Alvin Dark." Asked for comment, Durocher fumed "there was no chance of our using Newsom. After all, our line-up was set early in the season."

September 28th: The Cincinnati Redlegs today fired Birdie Tebbetts, their manager. Rumors were current that the Cincinnati management was trying to land Alvin Dark from the Giants to take over the reins.

October 1st: The World Series opened in Brooklyn today, with the Yankees, who have no pitchers and no hitters who batted higher than .260, heavily favored to win their sixth straight championship. The Dodgers, on the other hand, with four pitchers with more than twenty victories, strengthened their staff by the acquisition of Bobo Newsom. "He'll help us a lot," Manager Alston said.

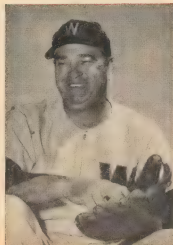
October 6th: The Yankees have done it again! With Allie Reynolds pitching two innings of shut-out ball in relief, the American League champions downed the Dodgers, 4 games to 2. The losing hurler was Bobo Newsom.

October 15th: Interviewed by a reporter who found him sitting on his front porch here today, Alvin Dark, of the New York Giants, said, "It's my natural position."

October 20th: After 25 years in organized baseball, Bobo Newsom, veteran pitcher, today received his unconditional release from the Brooklyn Dodgers. "I'll be back next year," Bobo said. "After all, there are a lot of teams around today whom Old Bobo could help a lot."

November 1st: Baseball's major leagues met today in executive session to plan their campaigns for next year. During the course of the meetings, it was announced that the Washington Senators had signed Bobo Newsom to a contract.

December 1st: Bobo Newsom today applied for Social Security.



Bobo Newsom. A lot of teams expect great things from him this year, all 16 of them.

They Never Quit

When the rodeo gets in your blood, it doesn't matter if you're good, bad or indifferent. You'll try until you die.



Illustration by CHARLES GEER

By FRANK O'ROURKE

The wind that night lay bone cold over the mountains, feathering the aspens at timberline and whistling down the canyons onto the piñon and juniper slopes before spending its blunted fury on the sage and chamiso flats bordering the river gorge. Red Adkins came off the high pass trail at midnight and rode downward through the streaky gray dawn. He entered Cañon at eight o'clock and went directly to the contest grounds.

The Brahman steers were polishing their horns against the barked corner posts, the bucking string ate and snorted in the feed pens behind the chutes; and sleeping in the hay piles was a full complement of contestants. Counting the tousled heads on the Association saddles, Red Adkins recognized every toponotch bronc rider, roper, and bulldogger in the business. Red Adkins had thirty dollars for beans and entry fees, a sum that dwindled into failure when he saw this crowd. But he couldn't cry over spilt milk—might as well hang and rattle, hoping for the best.

He had ridden two days and a night to make this contest, crossed the mountains in hope of easy competition. Now he had a little time to rest, go through the motions, and head back home broke and unhappy. Red Adkins turned his sorrel into the saddle-horse pen and followed the drifting coffee smell to the red-and-white lunch wagon set up beside the office. Old Price was ready with hamburgers, dill pickles, and coffee; and pounding the front drop counter until it came down on rusty chains, he grinned up at Old Price who just growled:

"You again. What you doin' here amongst the men?"

"Ham and eggs," Red Adkins said. "Pass the coffee, Price."

He drank three cups of boiling coffee before Old Price served his plate. Adding a loaf of bread and butter, old Price said maliciously:

"Heard you was still at Cimarron. Get fired?"

Old Price knew all about Red Adkins. When spring came, Red had to take off, hunt down the nearest contests, blow his winter pay on entry fees and living expenses. Then, broke again and rarely in the money, Red Adkins took another job for fall and winter. He was thirty this spring and he'd followed the contests fifteen years, and never won better than second money. They called him old hard-luck and liked him fine, but it seemed as if he never improved. So, understanding old Price's words, Red Adkins said, "Took a week off," and bent over his plate. Finished, he went

around the "tomatine" wagon to the office and faced the contest owner, Les Putnam, and waited for the big man's harangue.

Les Putnam had a round, pink face that mostly smiled, but now broke into anger wrinkles when confronted by one of his yearly crosses.

"You," Putnam said. "Back again, Red?"

"Want to sign up," Red Adkins said.

"For what?"

"Everything."

Les Putnam said dourly, "A fool and his money."

Accepting the entry fees for bronc riding, roping, and bulldogging, Putnam worked up his usual head of steam and finally cut loose with the spring sermon.

"Frosty's here," Putnam said meaningfully. "Thoms, McGonigal, Rance, Evans, old Slim, Doughbilly, all of 'em."

Putnam named the top men who took down 1st and 2nd money nearly every time around the circuit. Putnam rolled off those names while Red Adkins retreated into blank-faced indifference.

"All of 'em," Les Putnam said. "Frosty took 1st in bronc riding last week at Gallup. McGonigal had a sixteen second average in roping. Doughbilly threw his steer in seventeen. And I'm looking at a top hand who ought to stick to his job, and if he ever stuck could make foreman in five years and own his own spread in ten. A red-headed, fat-headed, thick-headed stringbean who don't have the original sense his Momma gave him. Red, when you goin' to quit?"

"Got the same old nags this year?" Red Adkins asked gently.

Nothing angered Putnam like calling his fine bucking string a bunch of nags. They were the toughest remuda in the business; and his steers were the wiriest, meanest Brahms ever yanked from the brush. Putnam swelled like a frog, puffing his pink cheeks, and then grinned.

"Same old nags," he said softly. "Same nags you never rode yet, and never will."

"Sure," Red Adkins said. "See you, Les."

He walked back to the chutes and climbed onto a top board seat and stared across the arena at the grandstand. Two thousand seats, every one certain filled for the afternoon. In this little town on the old river, in the country that really knew and loved the game; they'd come on horses, in buggies, a few in the new-fangled touring cars, out of the mesa land, the canyons, the long valleys, stirring up the thin brown dust across the sage and chamiso flats into Cañon. They were his people and this contest, in

that way, meant more to the contestants than all the big eastern money shows. For these people understood and gave their approval only to the finest efforts. They knew the best, and they expected nothing less.

Red Adkins watched life spread across the grounds, heard the familiar sounds, felt the slow, warm touch of winds from the flats and the river gorge. Old Price was busy as a one-armed paperhanger, cooking breakfast for Putnam and all the boys. A few automobiles drove in from town, the kids appeared magically on the chute fence and around the feed pens. And the contestants woke, brushed hay from their sunburned noses, and made their brief toilets at the water tank.

He was a piece of this life, but never a complete part of the whole. And yet, they all started the same way, growing up with a horse and rope, in the same country on the same equal footing. They caught the fever and nothing could keep them from the broncs and the ropes and the steers; but, as Les Putnam said, many were called and few chosen. For one man making good you saw a dozen hanging to this life by a thin hair, making the circuit and earning a living, but no more. Red Adkins had been tempted many times, but he knew too well if he ever got hurt or went broke on that circuit, he'd never live it down inside him.

He'd never tried it, and now he was too old and Les Putnam's advice was true. He ought to quit, but he always came back one more time . . . rode and roped and bulldogged. And went back in the brush flat-broke. But the dream never broke. Some day he'd make those rides, rope that near-record time, throw that steer fast, take down 1st money. Some day he'd know how it really felt, after watching the others so many years.

Now he sat on the fence, smelling the dust that was different, listening to the talk, just hanging around on the edge. The boys were moving out for the parade but Red Adkins never rode with them, decked out in a bright shirt and bandana, with the town mayor leading on his palomino and the town band playing Souza marches in the plaza stand. Contest owners demanded that all contestants ride in the parade, but Red Adkins didn't have a red shirt and green bandana, and nobody expected his kind to waste good money. No, it was all right for him to straddle the chute fence. Nobody blamed him, and he could always pay his entry fees and ride.

Behind the chutes, the clown was checking the carpetbag that held the trained rooster which he released at

the proper moment of his backward ride on a bronc, so he could chase the rooster around the arena, shooting blanks from a big old .45. Red Adkins watched the clown and heard the broncs shuffle against the hide-smoothed planks in the feed pens. Nobody left but the clown and old Price and himself.

Red Adkins took himself down and over to the hay piles and stretched out in the rising sunheat for his first sleep in thirty-six hours. Far off downtown he heard the faint *Oompah*... *Oompah!* of the tuba as the band started the parade; then he slept, hat over his sun-roughed face, hands thrust into his belt, with worn boot toes pointed toward the sky. Thinking of his job over the mountain, breaking wild stock, one of the best at that trade because he knew horses so well; thinking how when he got in the chute and headed out for the ride, he wasn't the same man. Like so many other ropers who rarely missed a catch at home but tightened up before a crowd.

Red Adkins slept until someone passed and called, "Light a shuck, Red," and then he woke to the business at hand.

THE town band was in the grandstand, the buggies and horses and touring cars were lined up dusty and thick. It was one o'clock and time to begin. Les Putnam waited behind the chutes, hat in hand, and the boys were gathering round to draw their broncs. This was a one-day contest and that meant the customary Association rules were off. You rode one bronc and, in the judges' decision, you either went down or qualified for the finals; and you had to be good in this crowd, at this home-folks show. You had better come out with the spurs neck-high and the reins six inches off the withers, and you'd better ride high and wide and wild until the whistle or say so-long to the money.

Red Adkins stood on the circle's edge while others drew and read, and then cursed or grinned. Les Putnam called, "All right, Red," and they opened a hole for him to come through and draw. He grabbed a slip and read the bronc's name—Wildfire—and grinned at Frosty and McGonigal.

"Old Wildfire," Frosty said. "Give him a good talking to, Red."

"Sure will," Red Adkins said.

He walked with them around the chutes, ready to help out if needed, balling up the slip and dropping it in the dust. He'd drawn one of Putnam's good broncs, a big fifteen hundred pound roan that never failed to give satisfaction. A man could make the top ride on such a horse, but the man had to be good himself. Red

Adkins had ridden Wildfire two years ago; rode at him, as the boys put it, because the balloon ascension commenced that day on the third jump.

He stood beside the chutes and heard the fat announcer open the contest, naming the contestants and their past triumphs, calling the first rider and horse of the afternoon.

Dynamite was in chute One, getting the saddle and the flank rigging, the old tickler, the handlers tightening down the cinches and laying out the braided bucking rein. No more quirting or hat fanning these days, everybody riding the standard Association saddle. Putnam reached through the chute timbers and chalked his white lines on Dynamite's withers, marking exactly how far ahead they could set that saddle. Then Frosty climbed the chute and dropped down on Dynamite and said calmly, "Turn him to me," just before they sprang the gate and Dynamite hit the road.

Red Adkins clung to the fence and watched Frosty, for this was his life, these moments in which he, and all others like him, identified themselves with the man on the horse, feeling every buck and crashing jar as the horse fought the man.

Frosty made a fine ride and everybody knew it was a finals ride before Dynamite took four jumps. Frosty was one of the best, an eight-year veteran of the big circuit, a rider who showed the real polish when he came out on a bronc. Frosty had those fine points, those earmarks of the finished rider, all the little extras Red Adkins had never acquired. The tiny differences between the money and the broke ride home.

Then the afternoon was racing along, and it was wild riding that day, for these were the home-folks who cut their teeth on the same materials. Fourteen men went through the chutes, seven didn't finish, four qualified for the finals; then the announcer was consulting his list and calling Red Adkins on Wildfire, adding that Red was an old friend known to all. When he climbed the chute and looked down on Wildfire, Red Adkins heard the warm word of applause.

"You got a good horse," McGonigal said, "Pop him good, Red."

RED ADKINS studied Wildfire's kinky back and slipped into the saddle, squeezing his legs against Wildfire's sides to clear the chute timbers. For a brief moment he remembered the past years, the countless times he'd set a saddle and broke through that chute door and kissed the dust. Red Adkins said, "Turn him to me," and the gate banged open and he went out with his spurs on Wildfire's neck, knowing it must be a wild ride if he wanted the finals,

knowing that he had to make it his best.

They were yelling encouragement and, suddenly, it was like squeezing everything he knew into one hard lump; or else it was just that Wildfire gave him a hard-hitting, crooked, popping ride and for once he did everything and even looked up from the head before he heard the whistle and the pick-up man ranged alongside for the bucking ride and snubbed Wildfire's head up. Red Adkins slid off and walked unsteadily toward the chutes, heard the applause, and saw Putnam grinning as the judges sent down their decision.

"Man," Putnam said. "What you been doin' all winter?"

"Nothing," Red Adkins said.

"You qualified for the finals," Putnam said. "Good work, Red, and good luck."

Frosty gave him a hand over the fence and passed the makings. Red Adkins leaned against the boards, felt his head clear, his neck settle back on his body as the ride effects eased away. Frosty said, "I never saw a better ride."

"Thank Wildfire," Red Adkins said modestly.

"Sure," Frosty grinned. "Better take it easy now, Red."

RED ADKINS smoked and watched the potato race, the Roman race, and then it was roping time and he went for the sorrel and worked the kinks from his ropes and tested his piggins' string. Putnam was beside the steer chute, the handlers were testing the chute and barrier springs, and McGonigal was first man up as the Brahman squared off behind the chute door. The top roper in the country, come home to make his catch for the folks who really knew.

McGonigal said quietly, "All right, boys," and the Brahman busted out, the barrier rope snapped back, and McGonigal was after him on his wonderful roping horse, throwing that perfect loop that bounced off the steer's neck and settled over, coming off the horse and going down the line and making the throw and tie in near-record time, fifteen and two-tenths seconds, the kind of time that cut the heart from other men.

What could he do against a man like McGonigal, a horse that good? A man and horse who worked together twelve months a year, until man and horse became one mind. What could he do on his sorrel, a fine horse and old friend of eight years, but a working horse that did not understand the urgent race against time, only the every-day work with a hundred cows.

Red Adkins watched the steers go out and down, heard the announced times, and then he was behind the

barrier and his steer—a big blue—was cutting the dust. He broke good and made his catch, and then as always, racing down the line for his throw, he lacked the brute strength that saved those precious seconds. Into the acrid dust, making the throw, knitting fast and clean, and breaking away; he made good time—twenty seconds—but against today's competition that good time was worthless.

McGonigal went out again and made a flat seventeen seconds, the others followed, Red Adkins roped again; and finished with an average of twenty and five-tenths seconds, good for fifth place. Close, he thought wryly, but no cigar. He tasted salt in his mouth and walked back to the tank for a drink before the bulldogging started. Bending over, he tasted salt and a little blood from a cut inside his lips, and felt the weariness creep up his legs into his arms and chest and head. When he returned to the chutes, Les Putnam said,

"You okay, Red?"

"Fine," Red Adkins said.

"You don't look it," Putnam said bluntly. "Why don't you skip the bulldogging, Red. Get your money back."

"What for?" Red Adkins said. "I come to play."

Les Putnam shrugged and turned away as the announcer shouted his name, for he was first up, no chance to rest the sorrel. Not that it mattered too much, he'd either make good time on his first steer or get licked for sure. He broke fast and, for a moment as he rode down and leaned, felt like pulling a hoolihan, throwing the steer on the run, a practice outlawed by the Association. Now they had to stop the steer before they threw him, and Red Adkins lacked that extra strength. He made a good stop and fair time, and then sat on the fence while Evans and Doughbelly set near-record times he could never beat. Red Adkins got off the fence and stopped beside Putnam.

"Scratch me the rest of the way," he said.

"Good," Putnam said. "Take a rest, save it for the bronc."

Red Adkins went to the water tank and washed his dusty head, let the water roll down his chest and back under his dirt-streaked calico shirt. Steers were going out, Evans and Doughbelly were staying on top, Doughbelly taking 1st money by two seconds; and then it was time for the bronc finals. Red Adkins knew how the folks were settling back, slow and happy, anticipating the big event that closed the day; and thinking of those "Finals" broncs, Red Adkins felt the tremor in his legs.

Putnam saved the five toughest for the finals. Midnight and Tornado,

and old Tombstone, and two others. Broncs that jarred a man loose from his body and, many times, bucked a man unconscious before he even had time to fall or be rescued by the pickup men. Red Adkins had never stuck one of those old campaigners until today when he rode Wildfire, and Wildfire was just a cut below that top class.

He was in the finals with Frosty, Rance, and two others almost as good. He heard the announcer start the spiel, heard the angry grunts as Midnight went into chute One. Les Putnam turned from the chute and said, "I drew for you, Red," and handed him the slip.

"Who?" Red Adkins said.

"Tombstone."

Frosty was perched on the top chute board, waiting for his name to be called. Red Adkins rubbed his face as sunheat set up a tiny dancing in his eyes. Thirty years old, he thought angrily, too damned young to act like a woman about to faint just because he drew the toughest horse in the Putnam string. Red Adkins walked steadily to the chutes and climbed up to watch Frosty make the first ride of the finals. The sun was dropping low above the grandstand, dust lay brown and filmy over the racetrack and the arena. Old Price had closed up the lunchwagon and sat, like a black crow with a white aproned breast, atop the side fence. This was the last time around, this was really

what they came for, a few seconds that could never be matched by anything else on earth.

"Frosty Daniels," the announcer was shouting through his megaphone. "Coming out of Chute One on Midnight!"

"Turn him to me," Frosty said.

The gate creaked and banged, and Midnight blew up all over, coming out and going high as Frosty raked spurs at the neck and brought them all the way back, then forward again, riding wild and not even looking at Midnight's head, giving the home folks a taste of the very best, the wildest ride of the day so far. Red Adkins saw the ease and polish of the big man in that saddle, heard the whistle shrill through the sound and dust, saw Frosty jump clear as the pickup man closed in, hit the ground and come walking steady as could be. The crowd nearly lifted off the grandstand roof, for Frosty had laid out a near-perfect ride that had to be matched.

Red Adkins clung to the fence and watched the others set down, tighten their legs, unbuckle their belts, and nod to the gatemen; watched Rance and the others do their level best on the big, tough horses and fail to match Frosty's ride. Rance was the nearest, and the fourth man parted company from Tornado on the third jump. And then it was the announcer speaking:

"Red Adkins, out of chute Two, on Tombstone, last ride of the day!"



"Oh, I like your driving dear. You make it seem like a thrill to get home alive!"

And it was like a hundred times in the past. Frosty was sitting tight on 1st money, Rance was 2nd, another man was hanging strong on 3rd, and where was Red Adkins as the grandstand sat back and faced him expectantly through the rising dust and the heat devil? Coming out on Tombstone, with as much chance as a snowball in hell.

"All right, Red," Putnam called. "Let's go."

RED ADKINS climbed the chute and looked down on Tombstone, and eased into the saddle. Frosty was hanging over the chute, talking to him, words that didn't come through. Red Adkins took the bucking rein and squeezed his legs hard and heard Frosty saying, "Watch that jumpback, Red, and that side-winding." Frosty knew old Tombstone from twenty rides over the past years, Red Adkins had never been up on this champion horse, and Frosty was giving him the best advice a man could pass along.

Red Adkins tried to shake the sun-glare from his eyes, and felt the saddle stickily-hot between his legs, and then it was time and he said thinly, "Turn him to me!" and knew, as the gate banked open and Tombstone surged beneath him, that today was now or never. It came hard to a man, sometimes he never admitted the truth, but it finally came through the heat and dust and sweat and the bronc convulsing under him, as Tombstone left the chute and roared into the arena. He was on a top horse, it had to be a top ride, and it might as well be today with all its spots.

Red Adkins held his spurs high and took the smashing blow as Tombstone made one crooked jump and hit stiff-legged, and transmitted that savage force through his big-barreled body and the saddle into Red Adkins' neck and head and mind. Tombstone went back and he was ready for that, and then it was a half backward spin that made him feel drunken and lost, and then side-winding, leather-popping jumps across the arena until everything whirled before Red Adkins' eyes—fence, men, grandstand, sky—everything was clouded in dust and sun, and he was riding as he never rode before, and someone was yelling hoarsely, that was his own voice he discovered, shouting drunken threats against the horse; then he was going and saw nothing as the red glare pressed down like a hammer blow on his eyes and head, and he thought wearily, "Another time gone," and tried to squeeze his legs as Tombstone straightened out from the far side. Then he heard nothing and felt no more, tasted blood and salt on his lips as the earth came up to meet him. His last thought was, "Don't

let him kick me," and then Red Adkins had water on his face, and found the strength to open his eyes.

He was on the hay pile and they were all around him. He saw Frosty and McGonigal, and the others, and Putnam was fiddling with his head that, now, felt as if somebody had pumped him full of cement and let him dry out hard in the sun.

"All right," Red Adkins said.

"Lay still," Putnam said. "You got off lucky."

He couldn't feel much in his body but that meant he hadn't been kicked, he had no broken bones; and his head was the hardest part of him, so everything was fine. He pulled his elbows back and raised up a little and took a drink of water and whisky, and grinned weakly at Frosty.

"Guess you done it again."

"I sure did," Frosty said. "2nd money ain't never hard to take."

"2nd money?" Red Adkins said.

"You," Putnam said. "Fat-headed, thick-headed fool!"

"But I never rode him out," Red Adkins said. "I don't remember no whistle."

"I guess not," Putnam said. "You rode him the last jumps plumb gone. We damn near never got you off. You was raking and yelling, and you never knew school was out or the barn burned down. But you made a ride, boy, you made a ride."

Red Adkins looked up at their faces, red and dirty and scratched, like his own, and knew they were all happy for him. He'd made a ride on the best and 1st money was his, and no man there begrudged him the name. He rubbed the wet towel across his face and wanted to get up, and couldn't move. He was that tired, bruised and beaten and maybe hurt inside, that he wouldn't know until next week, knew what the ride had cost him in body and head. Red Adkins said, "I'll just rest a while, boys, if you don't mind."

He closed his eyes and heard them go away. The day was finished, the grandstand empty, buggies and automobiles kicking up dust sausages across the flats toward home. Old Price was wrapping up, getting set for the long drive to the next contest town. They were talking all around him, packing up, readying to follow Old Price; and he could go along now if he so wished. He had the money, and the time, and he could last a month if he wanted to go.

Frosty came over and stuck a cigarette between his lips and scratched a match. Red Adkins drew smoke and Frosty said,

"Las Vegas next week, Red. You be there?"

Red Adkins lifted up and felt the

pain cut through his body. He said, "Sure, Frosty."

"Then take it easy," Frosty said. "Be a tough contest, Red. Lot more of the boys coming in from Fort Worth. Strickland and that bunch."

"Sure," Red Adkins said. "I got to ride home first. See you then."

Frosty was gone and he wanted to rest some more, but it was nearing sunset and time to move. Les Putnam came from the office and tucked the check into his shirt and stood over him, frowning in thought.

"Old Price fixed you a meal," Putnam said. "In case you figured or headin' straight home."

"I did," Red Adkins said, managing finally to sit up, then gain his feet. Putnam handed him the sandwiches wrapped in newspaper, with the cold brown glass of a beer bottle showing through.

"Listen," Putnam said. "I'm giving the big one next week in Las Vegas. Three days. Know what I want you to do, Red?"

"What?" Red Adkins said thickly.

"Stay home," Putnam said. "Stay home, work your rough string, don't be a fool."

PUTMAN was gone before Red Adkins could answer. And then it was time to get the sorrel and have a drink at the tank, and head east across the flats toward the high pass trail. Everything was gone and done now, the band and bunting and lemonade and faces, the bronses and steers and the dust in the empty arena. Red Adkins crawled into the saddle and rode from the contest grounds, around the town, out the wagon road. He ate as he rode, and drank the cold beer, and looked at the pink check. Two hundred and fifty dollars, all his, and his fingers hurting so badly he had to button the check back in his pocket before he dropped it in the dust.

He came again through the piñon and juniper slopes, riding high into the darkness, over the high pass trail, hunched forward now as his body stiffened and his head slowly returned to his neck. The wind was cold on his back, and he thought of the bronses and how many times a man could take that punishment before something snapped for keeps. Another day and night to get home, then five days before the Las Vegas show, no time to rest and get settled again. But it was time to face thirty years, and the bronses that never changed, and the ropers and bulldoggers who were always better; time to face the truth and quit.

And riding down the eastside trail toward the Cimarron, Red Adkins thought of Las Vegas next week and wondered if the boss would let him off.

REPORT from the Dean



Dean Quincy
abduct a nude woman!
Where could the
Board of Trustees ever
have gotten such a
wild and ridiculous idea?
By Octavus Roy Cohen

From:
Elwood W. Quincy, Ph.D., LL.D.
Dean, Conway College

To:
BOARD OF TRUSTEES.
Gentlemen:

In view of certain unusual occurrences of recent date, involving myself and certain students and faculty members of Conway College, I deem it my duty to submit to you a detailed report.

As is inevitably the case in any such situation, I recognize that a mere fragment of truth can be used as the basis for rumors which, in their total effect, amount to utter untruth. I will, therefore, set your minds at rest by listing these at the outset, and will then proceed to a complete explanation.

It is definitely untrue that I terminated the Senior Class entertainment and dance by forcibly abducting a nude woman who was at that time performing in the Cyrus H. Wheatly Memorial Gymnasium. The lady (who is the wife of one of our most respected younger faculty members) was, at the moment of my intervention, adequately clad in brassiere and panties. I merely threw a coat about her and carried her into the woods.

It is untrue that the Senior Committee openly advertised the entertainment as being of particular interest to wolves. The advertisements, which were slipped surreptitiously into the programs, were prepared without Committee or Faculty knowledge. The photograph which appeared on these program inserts was resurrected from the past, and the costume shown was infinitely more scant than that in which the lady performed. It was only after the fight started that certain of her outer garments were forcibly removed.

It is untrue that a male member of the Senior Class beat up a female member of the Sophomore Class in full view of the spectators. What he actually did was to place the culprit across his knees and administer well-deserved chastisement on the portion of her anatomy customarily associated with the word "spanking." May I state at this point that the treatment was psychological as well as physical, and that its therapeutic value was immeasurable.

It is untrue that the exhibition of terpsichorean art provoked a riot. The battle (itemized statement of damages to the gymnasium is attached) was incited by the unseemly conduct of a group of stalwart young men who had been smuggled into the Cyrus H. Wheatly Memorial Gymnasium for the express purpose of creating trouble. Several score of our better male students commendably volunteered their services to maintain the decorum which, for more than a century, has built up for this small, privately-endowed college an enviable reputation in the academic world. I attach affidavits from several of the participating students. These affidavits were obtained while most of them were still in the hospital.

It is untrue that one of our students, as a local newspaper reported, "slugged Professor Chester A. Landis and knocked him cold as a mackerel, and Dean Elwood W. Quincy promptly hung a kyo on the offender's jaw and sent him down for the ten count." In the first place, Dr. Landis is not a Professor, but an Assistant Professor. In the second place he was laid low by a solar plexus punch, and not by a blow on the jaw. And, in the third

place, after I yielded to my compulsion to strike the young man who had hit Dr. Landis, there was no count at all, though if there had been, any person could have counted to a hundred.

It is not true, as further stated by the newspaper, that in the course of the meleé "the joint was wrecked." No damage whatsoever was done to the walls, ceiling or gymnasium equipment.

And now, having reassured you on all important points, I feel it is incumbent upon me to go back to the beginning and outline concisely and officially the circumstances which led up to this regrettable affair. . . .

The first indication of the unusual was an anonymous letter received by me approximately ten days before the Senior Class Entertainment. This letter, which was typed (badly), was mailed in the branch post office which is maintained on the campus, and it has since been proved that it was authored by a young lady member of the Sophomore Class. (Her case has been turned over to the Dean of Women for disciplinary action.) The letter was as follows:

Dean Elwood W. Quincy
Conway College
Dear Cuddles:

(I pause here to remark that "Cuddles" is the nickname by which I am known to the student body. I abhor the appellation, but have always pretended that I did not know it was in general use.—EWQ)

Dear Cuddles:

What goes on, anyhow? How come the Senior Class Entertainment & Dance is going to feature a broad who made a living for three years in New York as a strip-teaser, with emphasis on bumps and grinds? The person who I refer to is Mrs. Marilyn Landis, who bumped and ground for a living under the name of Marilyn Mason. She is the wife of Professor Landis, who isn't a bad Joe, but ought to have more sense. You better put a stop to this or Conway College will start awarding scarlet letters instead of varsity "C's."

"A Well Wisher."

The use of the phrase "The person who I refer to" indicated incontrovertibly that the letter had been written by one of our students. The correct phrasing should have been "To whom I refer."

My initial impulse was to ignore the missive, but, after considerable thinking, I decided to show it to Dr. Landis.

Dr. Landis is completing his first

year (and a most brilliant one) as a member of our faculty. He received his Ph.D. from Columbia last June, and has been giving courses in English History & Literature, although the latter is his specialty, and the one on which he will concentrate when he is eventually made an Associate Professor. He is a small man, five-feet-five inches in height, weighing 127 pounds and having blue eyes, sandy hair and a mild disposition.

His wife is indeed named Marilyn, and our records indicate that her maiden name actually was Mason. She is a tall, statuesque young lady, with flaming red hair. She is 24 years of age, three inches taller than her husband, and, while amply-endowed by nature with feminine attributes, could not be described with precision as "voluptuous." It is my opinion that the words "sinuous" and "exciting" might more aptly be used. As the wife of a member of this faculty, she has conducted herself at all times with the utmost propriety.

In spite of the disparity in our ages (I am 47 and Dr. Landis is 20 years my junior), he and I entertain a mutual respect and admiration for each other. At all times, Dr. Landis' conduct has been above reproach and his manner impeccable.

After apologizing for bothering him over such a thing as an anonymous communication, and assuring him that I had summoned him only because I was certain it originated on the campus and that whoever had written it would not be content to end the campaign of calumny there, I showed him the letter.

He read and reread it with studious attention. When he had finished, he returned it to me. I said, "Of course, Dr. Landis, I realize that the statements made by our anonymous correspondent are untrue."

"Quite," he said. "Quite untrue." "Your wife was not a strip-teaser, was she?"

"She certainly was not," he said. "A strip-teaser is an untalented dancer who, in the course of her performance, removes certain essential articles of clothing."

"And your wife did not do that?" "Of course not," he explained. "From the very moment her act started, she was virtually unclothed."

I found this quite interesting. In answer to certain questions, Dr. Landis stated that his wife had indeed performed in night clubs for hire, but that she was a serious student of the dance and that her best number was called "Scheherazade" and was very classic. This impressed me as being quite cultural and on a plane which could not fail to prove beneficial to night-club patrons.

Illustrated by MILLER POPE

"Referring again to this letter, Dr. Landis," I said, "What is a bump?"

"A bump," he explained, "is a contortion of the nether portion of the torso, terminating in an abrupt forward thrust."

"And a grind?"

"A grind is a slow, provocative, rotary motion of the hips. It usually is completed by the execution of one or more bumps."

His anatomical knowledge seemed superior to mine, and so I pressed for further details, finding the subject most absorbing. He assured me, however, that Marilyn (his wife) had never resorted to these vulgar devices. He said, further, that, while she customarily wore a minimum of clothing, this was in the classic tradition, and that she was never more unclothed than the average Conway College co-ed at a bathing beach.

While hesitating to intrude on his personal life, I inquired as to his meeting with the young lady and the events which led up to his subsequent (and happy) marriage.

He explained that he had met her casually while a guest at a party. He immediately had been intrigued by her, and had visited the club several

times. Finally, he had asked her for what the students called a "date" and, to his astonishment, she answered in the affirmative.

"And Dean Quincy," he said earnestly, "you will never understand the thrill I received the first time I saw her with her clothes on."

It seems that they then went through the process of falling in love, a not unnatural phenomenon, which resulted in marriage. Marilyn continued to perform her classic dances for two years after they were married. This enabled Dr. Landis to complete his residence, his studies, and the brilliant thesis on which he was awarded his Doctorate.

Dr. Landis and I conferred for perhaps half an hour (until he was forced by schedule to meet with English III) and postponed further discussion until that night at his home, where I was invited to be his guest for dinner. Being a widower, and not too deft in the culinary arts, I accepted with pleasure.

Mrs. Landis, with some vehemence, upheld the contention of her husband that she never had resorted to any of the devices charged in the letter, namely strip-teasing, bumping and

grinding. I explained to her that it was difficult for me to comprehend fully these anatomical contortions without ever having seen them, and, at the insistence of Dr. Landis, she gave me a brief demonstration. Obviously, Dr. Landis had given me an incomplete description.

We then delved into the possible identity of the letter writer. Mrs. Landis, after remaining silent for a considerable length of time, advanced the theory that she thought the person might in some way be connected with one of our seniors, Mr. William (Butch) Garner. Mr. Garner is a superior type of athletic scholarship student, as he has always maintained a C average in spite of being an excellent blocking back. He is majoring in Physical Education, with minors in Art Appreciation, Music Appreciation and ROTC.

"Garner?" murmured Dr. Landis, with a rising inflection. "Is he the big lad who has been hanging around here so much recently: the football player?"

"Yes, dear," answered Mrs. Landis. "A remarkable young man," stated Dr. Landis, turning to me. "This semester he enrolled in two of my



Dr. Landis' wife had indeed performed in nightclubs, but not as a vulgar strip-tease who removed certain essential articles of clothing. "Of course not," Dr. Landis explained. "From the very moment her act started, she was virtually unclothed."

courses, and is so engrossed in them that he spends two or three evenings a week with me, getting extra coaching. He is far from brilliant, but I have never encountered any young man more earnest."

I glanced at Mrs. Landis. Her eyes were half closed and there was a lovely smile hovering about her lips. It was then that she looked at me and winked. "Earnest student is right," she commented. "He's at the stage where he would like to play Birds & Bees."

Dr. Landis glanced at her fondly but without comprehension. "Butch is in love with me," she continued.

"What a ridiculous thought," said Dr. Landis.

"Why? I'm only two years older than he is. I haven't yet lost what ever it was I used to have."

"You certainly have not," I stated gallantly.

"Well, what do you know," Mrs. Landis said. "Our revered Dean has eyes to see with."

I presumed to correct her. I explained that her statement should be rephrased so that the sentence would not end with a preposition.

DR. LANDIS broke into our byplay, his gentle voice showing mild curiosity. "This Butch," he inquired, "has he ever made . . . er . . . a . . . has he ever . . . ?"

"Made passes? No! And he never would. This is nothing new, really. I suppose almost every young faculty wife has encountered it in one way or another. It is . . . well . . ."

"A manifestation of ebullient youth?"

"Bingo!" she said.

Dr. Landis seemed unperturbed, and his precise, logical mind refused to be diverted from the issue at hand. He said, "Do you suspect Butch of writing the letter, my dear?"

"No."

"But you said—"

"Someone connected with him. He's a campus hero. My hunch is that some co-ed is overboard about him, and is therefore jealous of me. Now if we could *cherchez la femme* . . ."

We agreed that this might prove difficult, inasmuch as we have 493 female students on our rolls, all at the susceptible age. On the other hand, it was obviously wrong to let the matter drop where it was. It was then I insisted that Mrs. Landis must not abandon her proposed exhibition of classic dancing at the Senior Entertainment.

I interrupt at this point to explain that our Senior Class Entertainment is an annual affair much enjoyed by students and faculty alike. The de-

tails are handled by the Senior Committee, with the help of Faculty Advisers, and details are screened through my office. I knew that thus far the Committee had arranged for the following acts:

A young lady soprano majoring in Music, who had been instructed to confine herself to two numbers, neither of which was to be "Indian Love Call."

A male Junior who was reputed to be an excellent prestidigitator.

Two male Physical Education majors in a demonstration of muscular coordination and gymnastics.

A juggler (male).

A puppet show operated by two of our students (one male, one female). After graduation, these students plan to take their puppets on tour professionally and also to get married.

The balance of the entertainment was to be furnished by the talented members of the orchestra which had been engaged to play for the dance which would follow the show. These young gentlemen, all attached to Mr. Schnozzle Schneider's Jazzhouse Gang, were reputed to be quite remarkable, featuring in their special entertainment such novel things as washboards, jugs, one-string fiddles and musical saws.

It seemed obvious that Mrs. Landis' talents would impart to the whole thing a cultural tone without in any way impairing its entertainment value. After considerable debate, it was decided that she would perform her famous "Scheherazade" number, holding in reserve her Slave Dance in case an encore should be required.

At the time, it was of course impossible to anticipate any untoward happenings. It is true that Mrs. Landis suggested that we had better scrutinize the idea to see whether it had any bugs in it, and Dr. Landis and I both laughed heartily at her pungent manner of expressing herself. I assured her that all forms of insect life would be removed from the Cyrus H. Wheatley Memorial Gymnasium even if we had to use DDT, and for some reason she considered my remark funny, which surprised me as I felt sure that everyone by that time understood the efficacy of that amazing insecticide.

The Senior Committee accepted my endorsement with great glee, expressing their enthusiasm with picturesque, though unacademic, directness. One of them stated that my idea was strictly top drawer, another said it was the nuts, and the rest contented themselves with merely remarking, "Wow!"

Preparation for the entertainment proceeded apace. Wishing to assure myself that the dance which Mrs. Landis had agreed to render conformed to all classic standards, I spent

several evenings at the Landis home watching her rehearsal.

I am compelled to say that never have I seen a more beautiful dance than Scheherazade. Mrs. Landis rehearsed to the music of her phonograph, with only Dr. Landis and myself for audience, except one night when a large young gentleman walked in and was introduced to me formally as Butch Garner. I vaguely remembered him and quickly rescued my right hand from his crushing grip.

Mrs. Landis (Marilyn) immediately stopped rehearsing. She was, of course, wearing her Scheherazade costume which revealed all too little of her superb anatomy except during certain parts of the dance.

Butch proved to be a direct young man. He said to Dr. Landis, "Look here, 'Fessor—you can't let this thing go on."

Dr. Landis said he was afraid he didn't understand.

"Your wife dancing at the Entertainment."

"And why not?"

"Well, hell, 'Fessor . . . 'scuse me, Dean . . . it ain't right. Everybody on the campus is talking about it."

"And what is wrong with that, Garner?"

"Everything. They seem to think it's gonna be some sort of a cooch show."

Marilyn smiled at her new visitor. She said, "Don't you worry, Butch. Everything will come off fine."

"That's exactly what they're expecting."

"Mr. Garner," I interjected, "has it ever occurred to you that, if the student body is anticipating a pagan performance, they will be pleasantly surprised when Mrs. Landis demonstrates her flawless technique?"

The young man looked at me in a manner which defied interpretation. "Aaaaah!" he said. "Be your age, Dean."

AT this point, Dr. Landis produced the anonymous letter which I had previously placed in his custody and showed it to Mr. Garner. The young man turned a unique shade of purple. "That does it!" he exclaimed.

"Does what?"

"Explains why the campus is buzzing." He studied the letter again, frowning. "I got an idea—"

"Concerning the identity of the author?" I asked. "Do you know any student who might use the expression 'who I refer to'?"

"What's wrong with that?" he inquired. Then he said, with some grinning, "I think I know the tomato that wrote this. And if she did—" He left the sentence dangling, very much as a person is left dangling after being mortally hanged.

He remained only a few minutes longer, but, even after he had departed, the flavor of his vehemence remained. I felt quite depressed, as it seemed to me that Mr. Garner, while excellent on the football field, was sadly lacking in artistic appreciation.

DAYS passed swiftly, and the time for the Senior Entertainment approached apace. I was aware that there was an air of expectancy pervading the campus, but I attributed this to the excellent weather we were having and the natural student delight at the imminent conclusion of another scholastic year. On the morning of the great day, a yellow-and-green bus rolled across the campus. On its sides were large gold letters proclaiming that it belong to Mr. Schnozzle Schneider & His Jazzhouse Gang. Everything now seemed to be set, and I felt certain the approaching festivities would be completely enjoyable.

I will confess that what happened that night was both surprising and disturbing. Neither the events, nor their sequence, could possibly have been foreseen.

The Cyrus H. Wheatly Memorial Gymnasium had been lavishly decorated for the occasion. Shortly after 8:30, students and faculty, plus guests, commenced converging on the gymnasium from dormitories, fraternity houses, G.I. residences and faculty homes.

I drove by the home of Dr. Landis and picked up the Doctor and his beautiful young wife. Marilyn was carrying what I conceived to be a small handbag until she explained that this contained her two costumes.

Skirting the crowd that flocked around the entrance to the gymnasium, we deposited Mrs. Landis at the back door, which was being used as a stage entrance. Dr. Landis and I then went to the front with our tickets. Our appearance was greeted with flattering cries of pleasure from the students.

We handed our tickets to the young lady at the door, and she gave each of us a copy of the four-page program which had been financed by advertisements from the merchants of our fair city.

The interior of the gymnasium had been filled with chairs, so that it resembled an auditorium. These chairs were of the type usually rented out for funerals, and I later learned that they indeed had been borrowed from the mortuary parlors of Freiberg & MacManus.

At one end of the gymnasium was the rostrum, and on it were seated the young gentlemen of the Schnozzle Schneider Jazzhouse Gang. Their costumes were delightfully grotesque, including false noses, scarlet wigs, odd



Dr. Landis was staring rapturously at his wife, for which I do not blame him. The artistic merit of her performance was most impressive. Then, suddenly, just as I had begun to relax, a strident male voice yelled, "Take it off!"

shirts and trousers, and other comical appurtenances.

Relaxing in my seat near the rostrum, I opened my program. As I did so, a sheet of paper fluttered to the floor. I retrieved this and gazed at it with some surprise.

In the center of this bit of paper was an excellent halftone reproduction. The picture was of a most exotic young lady. The sum total of her costume was adequate; it was only the distribution which was in any way unusual.

THERE WERE many feathers on her head, she wore dancing shoes, and in between there was some sort of filmy material which covered, without successfully concealing, certain feminine charms. Beneath the halftone was the printed caption:

MARILYN MASON

(Wife of Professor Chester A. Landis)
As She Appeared For Three Years as
Solo Dancer at the Famous Hot
Diggity Club in New York

Despite the cacophony engendered by Mr. Schnozzle Schneider & His Jazzhouse Gang, I could hear a sort of a conjectural buzz throughout the gymnasium. The faces of our students resembled those of the spectators at a large fire, except that the fire had not yet started. Then, suddenly, for no apparent reason (though later investigation disclosed that it had been inspired by a fifty-dollar bill delivered personally to Mr. Schneider), the band launched into "There'll Be A Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight." At the time my only reaction was that the selection was singularly inappropriate. Later I revised my opinion.

The entertainment started. It was quite amusing, particularly the puppets, who were cleverly handled and who gave one amusing sketch in which one of the characters was supposed to represent me. It was somewhat ribald, but I entered into the spirit of the occasion and applauded loudly.

Eventually came the moment when Mrs. Landis was to perform her "Schererazade" dance. The lights were dimmed, and Mr. Schnozzle Schneider & His Jazzhouse Gang rendered the opening measures sweetly and reverently, save for a few discordancies from clarinet and trumpet which were later described to me as "hot licks."

Mrs. Landis then appeared. She looked lovely in the flowing diaphanous costume which had been brought to the gymnasium in one half of her handbag. She was greeted with remarkable enthusiasm.

Dr. Landis was staring rapturously at his wife, for which I do not blame him. The artistic merit of her performance was most impressive.

Then, suddenly, just as I had begun to relax, a strident male voice cut through the Cyrus H. Wheatley Memorial Gymnasium.

"Take it off!" demanded this voice, and almost instantly other masculine voices, each freighted with lecherous significance, picked up the refrain until shouts of "Take it off!" reverberated to the rafters.

I noticed that all of these shouts emanated from a compact group of unidentifiable young men who were massed at the right-rear of the gymnasium. I have since learned that these were not our students, but were townsmen who had been hired for the specific purpose of creating a disturbance.

Our own students, not relishing the interruption of the esthetic entertainment, promptly started saying "Ssssssh!" in chorus, but this seemed merely to incite the ruffians to further cries. The exhortation to "Take it off!" became more insistent and strident.

I have since learned that this is an expression used customarily in burlesque theaters and other places purveying to a low class of patrons. Dr. Landis had stiffened in his seat and his face was white with anger.

A similar effect apparently was being experienced by certain members of our student body. Many of these young gentlemen rose en masse, and one of them (whom I identified as Mr. Butch Garner) yelled, "If you don't shut your lousy mouths, we'll shut 'em for you."

That the unseemly demonstration had been inspired was immediately obvious to me. I realized that the honor and dignity of Conway College was in the process of severe impairment, and it was while I was considering what steps to take that Mr. Butch Garner, followed by many of our most formidable athletes, advanced upon the troublemakers. I feel certain they approached the brawl reluctantly (though speedily) and that they had no thought beyond a desire to shield Mrs. Landis from further embarrassment, and our revered alma mater from continued indignity.

What occurred immediately thereafter was described in one of our local newspapers as "a beautiful rhubarb." What it actually turned out to be was a combat of epic proportions, punctuated by the fleeing of the more timid males and the screams of frightened women.

The melée grew in sound and fury. Mrs. Landis had stopped dancing and was standing motionless in the glare of the spotlight. And it was at that moment that the arch culprit betrayed herself.

This person was a member of our Sophomore Class, a Miss Valerie Fos-

ter, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Barton D. Foster, of Elk City. She is 19 years of age, brunet, wealthy, and a B student. It has since developed that she considers herself deeply in love with Mr. Butch Garner and had thought that he was (as she herself expressed it) "nuts about the Landis dame."

Miss Foster edged through the embattled multitude and approached Mrs. Landis from the rear, the latter being unaware of the impending flank attack. Miss Foster's next move was unladylike, inexcusable and not in keeping with the traditions of this college. It also precipitated a series of events which seem to have come in for a considerable degree of misapprehension.

Miss Foster grabbed a portion of Mrs. Landis' costume and gave a decisive pull. There was a ripping sound, heard 'round the gymnasium, and the costume came off in its entirety. This, however, did not leave Mrs. Landis in a state of nudity as has been alleged. She remained clothed in brassiere and panties of minor dimensions. The picture she presented at thus being exposed to public gaze was pitiful but interesting.

Apparently impelled by excessive zeal, as well as jealousy, Miss Foster started to wave the costume about her head, uttering loud cries of "Yippee!"

SEVERAL other things occurred in swift sequence. A large and pugnaacious townsman detached himself from the general battle and rushed to reinforce Miss Foster. He reached for the trophy which Miss Foster was so proudly waving, but he was not destined to secure permanent possession of it, because at the same instant two other gentlemen converged on this new center of activity. One was Mr. Butch Garner and the second was Dr. Landis. I myself, aroused to a high pitch of indignation, followed Dr. Landis.

As I have mentioned previously, Dr. Landis is of frail stature, but I learned then that, within his puny bosom, there beats the heart of a lion. With fists clenched he rushed to assault the townsman who temporarily was waving the garment so recently snatched from Mrs. Landis. He made a rather futile swing, and it was then that the ruffian from town feinted for Dr. Landis' jaw with his left and followed with a violent blow to the solar plexus. Dr. Landis sank to the floor, where he lay gasping for breath.

Mr. Butch Garner had become temporarily embroiled with two other townsmen, and was delayed thus in reaching the spot of maximum activity. I was the only man near at hand, and I realized that it behooved me to uphold the dignity of this institution.

Although 47 years of age, I have kept myself in excellent physical condition with daily calisthenics, deep-breathing exercises and walking through the countryside.

I therefore struck the townsman violently on the left side of the jaw about a half inch above the point of his chin.

The results were highly satisfactory. The young man stiffened for the fractional part of an instant, then fell rigidly backward. I heard a voice yell, "Nice work, Cuddles," and caught a brief glance of the owner of the voice. It was Mr. Butch Garner, who seemed to be having a fine time.

At that moment, Miss Valerie Foster said something to Mr. Garner which I did not hear, but which seemed to imbue him with superhuman strength. He tore himself loose from his two adversaries and, rushing forward, seized Miss Foster in his arms.

She resisted violently, but her efforts were of no avail. Mr. Garner carried her up on the rostrum where he seated himself in a chair. He immediately pulled Miss Foster across his lap (face down) and proceeded to administer a spanking which fairly shook the walls of the Cyrus H. Wheatly Memorial Gymnasium.

During this procedure, a truce seemed to be declared, and all and sundry turned to watch the proceedings, paying no heed to Miss Foster's piercing cries for assistance. As soon as Mr. Garner completed the operation, he set Miss Foster back on her feet and leaped down from the rostrum to re-engage the same two townsmen with whom he had previously been fighting. At this point the general battle was resumed throughout the gymnasium with what seemed to be a vastly-increased enthusiasm.

My attention then focused on Mrs. Landis, who now was standing as though paralyzed. Dr. Landis had stopped gasping, but was still definitely *hors de combat*, and I thereupon performed the act which has caused certain malicious gossips to state that I abducted a nude woman.

As hereinbefore stated, Mrs. Landis was not nude. In the second place, I did not abduct her. I merely removed my coat, threw it about her shoulders, picked her up in my arms and carried her through the back door to the small patch of woods in the rear of the gymnasium known to our students as Neckers' Forest.

In the course of this operation I discovered that Mrs. Landis possessed less avoirdupois than I had thought. She cooperated in her own rescue by wrapping her arms about my neck, and I felt then that I possessed the strength of Hercules. An inexplicably warm glow suffused me, even after we

reached our woodland sanctuary. I then paused to consider what my next move should be.

To return her to the Cyrus H. Wheatly Memorial Gymnasium was, at that moment, impossible. The battle was still in progress, and groups of struggling young men had spilled through the doors of the gymnasium. I had seen no further sign of Dr. Landis, and presumed therefore that he was still in a condition of innocuous desuetude.

I could not immediately take Mrs. Landis to her home, as I was certain we could not gain access to the house. It obviously was impossible that she had a house key concealed about her, since there was no place where it could have been concealed.

I continued to hold Mrs. Landis in my arms. True, I considered putting her down, but remembered that traces of poison ivy had been reported in Neckers' Forest, and it occurred to me that the amount of exposed epidermis would make her peculiarly subject to this discomfiting botanical scourge. In addition to that, I was struck with the idea that, whereas it seemed quite correct for a gentleman to be holding Scheherazade in his arms, her costume was utterly incongruous for walking in the woods at night.

Eventually things quieted down at the Cyrus H. Wheatly Memorial Gymnasium, except for the frequent arrival and departure of ambulances. From my vantage point beneath the spreading boughs of a venerable tree known as Lovers' Oak, and reputed to have been planted by our first graduating class 100 years ago (although this has never been established as an incontrovertible fact), I saw Dr. Landis emerge from the gymnasium and lurch toward the spot where I had parked my car. I thereupon carried my fair burden to the car, and inside found Dr. Landis. No one saw me except a few of our guests and a newspaper reporter. Inasmuch as I was still holding Mrs. Landis in my arms, it is possible that this gentleman of the press did not see that she was as adequately clothed as any classic dancer should be, and this is what may have given rise to the rumor that, at a late hour, I was observed staggering from the woods with a nude woman in my arms.

Mrs. Landis was seated between her husband and myself as I drove to the Landis house. We assisted her through the front door, and Dr. Landis then wrapped her in a voluminous woolen robe. He then brought her a large glass of brandy (strictly for medicinal purposes). Observing the marvelous restorative powers of this alcoholic beverage, I suggested that he and I should also each absorb a modest portion. This we did.

I did not even then sense the enormity of what had transpired. It did not occur to me that my actions, or those of Mrs. Landis, would ever be the subject for gossip.

At just about that time, there was a loud banging on the Landis front door. I admitted two persons: Mr. Butch Garner and Miss Valerie Foster. Mr. Garner was, as he expressed it, "sore as hell," and Miss Foster was crying. It was obvious that she was filled with contrition. I invited her to have a seat. By way of response she placed her hand on the rear of her anatomy and remarked that she never expected to sit down again.

At Mr. Garner's insistence, Miss Foster now told her story. She confessed that she had been consumed by a mad, unreasoning jealousy, and that the announcement that Mrs. Landis would perform at the Senior Entertainment had caused her to plot a diabolical revenge.

She stated that the plan was hers in its entirety. She had paid the town ruffians to attend the performance with instructions to shout "Take it off" when Mrs. Landis started her dance. However, she insisted, she had not anticipated a battle, nor any of the other unfortunate happenings.

She admitted sending to a friend in New York in order to obtain the photographs taken of Mrs. Landis when she was performing at the Hot Diggity Club, in order that Dr. Landis might acquire his Doctorate. She admitted inserting one sheet into each of the programs. She admitted that, in the excitement of the battle, she had been overcome by her emotions and had torn away Mrs. Landis's costume, but stated that this had been an unpremeditated gesture. She finally apologized to Mrs. Landis, stating that she (Miss Foster) had been "seven kinds of a louse." Forgiveness was graciously extended by Mrs. Landis, and the two young people then departed, apparently reconciled.

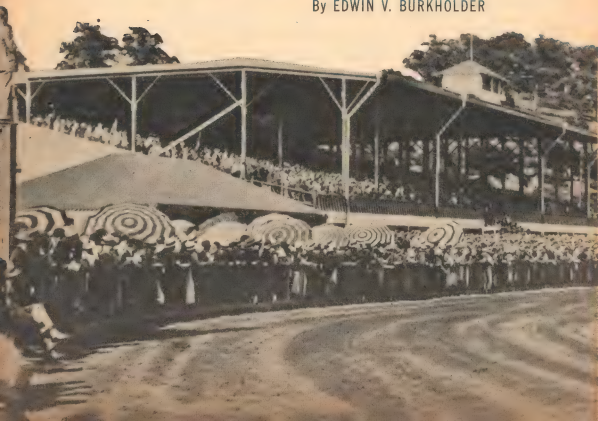
So, Gentlemen of the Board of Trustees, there are the simple facts, unadorned by rumor, untarnished by conjecture. The purpose of this detailed report is to free you from any apprehension that anything which occurred could have a deleterious effect on Conway College.

As a matter of fact, it now appears that the contrary is true. Less than an hour before starting this report I received a visit from the Registrar, who informed me that he already has received more applications for next semester than we can possibly accommodate. It is gratifying to know that, despite the unusual happenings reported herein, Conway College still is regarded as one of the staunchest citadels of culture.

What can you,
what can any one man do,
to combat the growing empire
of dope that is strangling
our country? Here's what one
young man did, singlehanded, in
one of the most amazing
true adventures of modern times.
He went...

UNDERCOVER

By EDWIN V. BURKHOLDER





Papa Donnici looked forlorn and bewildered as he was booked after exposure. (Below) The Riverside Race Track, where "The Kid" began his dope career.

FOR DOPE

The youth came out of the rainy darkness of the side alley, walked slowly with a limp down 12th Street in Kansas City. A gray felt hat was pulled down over his forehead and his cheap raincoat was water-soaked. At a darkened doorway he stopped, looked around furtively several times, then slipped inside and into a dark and musty smelling hallway.

He went up the rickety stairs on tiptoe, his crippled leg bothering him some. On the second floor there was no bulb, but a thin sliver of light shone under a door to his right. The youth limped over to it, knocked sharply five times.

The door opened a few inches and a flat-faced man peered out and called



to somebody behind him, "Tiny, the kid's back—the kid with the long scar."

A grunt was the only answer. He opened the door wider and the youth limped through it into a large room. He stopped a few steps inside, pulled his water-soaked felt hat off, held it in his right hand. Water was dripping off his raincoat, forming a circle of little pools around his feet. He was tall and slim and would have been handsome except for the long scar across his right cheek, twisting the corner of his mouth grotesquely.

The room was furnished with gaudy draperies, oil paintings of nudes, and a large couch with a blood-red cover. A huge man, weighing well over 300 pounds, sat in a specially-built chair at the end of the couch. His face was heavy around the jaws, but the nose and mouth came to a sharp point. The eyes were small, with little puffs of fat under them.

The punk who had opened the door and a big husky bruiser with a bulldog face sat on the couch. The punk laughed with his belly. "The kid came back to buy a capsule."

The limping youth shifted his weight from his right to his left foot and his fingers fumbled the rim of the hat nervously. "I came back to buy pieces, Tiny," he said to the big man. "I got the gold."

He pulled a roll of bills from his inside coat pocket, thumbed them so the big man could see them. "Here."

The eyes of the big man, known in the Kansas City dope underworld as Tiny Abbe, squinted at the money. Ruthless and deadly, Tiny prided himself on never being fooled, but he was puzzled now, and just a little bewildered.

An hour before, the kid had limped into that room. Tiny had heard of him as a new and ambitious small-time pusher, working the college towns around Kansas City. Small-time operators didn't interest Tiny, and he had curtly told the kid he only sold heroin in "pieces," the dope underworld's name for wholesale lots that required at least a thousand dollars.

The kid had left the room without a word, and now he was back with a thousand dollars in his hand. The squinting expression didn't leave Tiny's eyes. He turned to the flat-faced punk and said, "Okay, Spike, the kid's got the money."

Within a few minutes the deal was completed and the kid limped out of the room carrying four packages of heroin with him. Tiny watched the door close behind him, heard the footsteps going down the stairs. And Tiny's eyes still had the puzzled squint.

Spike said, "He had the gold, Tiny —he sure as hell did."

"Maybe, he had too much money and he got it too easy," Tiny answered. "Follow him, Spike, and if there's anything funny about his actions, let me know and we'll take care of him."

"Okay, I get you, Tiny," Spike answered, and walked out of the room.

Down on the street the kid limped through the rainy darkness. He turned several times, without stopping, just far enough to see Spike's form in the wavering blackness. The kid got to the entrance of the alley, flattened himself against the wall of a building.

Spike continued walking along 12th Street. When he was out of sight, the kid darted into the alley. His limp was gone. He ran swiftly, like a trained runner. A car was standing at the end of the alley. The rear door flew open and with a leap the kid was in the back seat. The car lunged forward and roared down the rain-soaked street.

The man in the back seat said, "Well, you're still alive."

"Alive and kicking," the kid answered. "Tiny Abbe fell for it like a hungry fish taking bait."

His companion shook his head. If anybody in that Kansas City area knew the deadly power of Tiny Abbe and the way he operated, it was United States District Attorney Maurice Milligan, whose relentless war against dope peddlers, as well as his fight against the Pendergast machine, which ended with Boss Pendergast going to prison, made his name a byword in the Middle West.

"Don't start kidding yourself," he said to the kid. "Tiny Abbe isn't an easy man to fool. You were lucky this time, but you may not be the next. You can still change your mind."

"I'm satisfied," the kid said.

In the records of the Narcotics Bureau, the story of George A. Cullen, alias "The Kid," started on that night of July 14, 1940. Cullen isn't quite sure today when it really did begin. The whole thing still seems like a strange dream, a weird play in which he was the leading actor.

The year before he had been a law student at the University of Missouri. Dope and crime were vague and abstract things to him. He didn't know then, as he went to his classes, that the series of events which were to catapult him into his role as undercover man had already started. In fact, the first had taken place the year before when Federal agents patrolling a lonely side road outside of El Paso, Texas, came upon the body of a dead man.

It looked like the typical automobile accident. The car had hit a tree

and was completely smashed. The body of the driver had been thrown clear of the wreckage. But the picture underwent a radical change when the agents took a look at the dead man. He was "One-Eyed" Maxie Gordon, who had risen from the gangs of East Side New York to become overlord of the dope underworld. When the autopsy was performed, it was found Gordon had suffered a heavy blow at the back of the head and was either dead or unconscious when his car crashed into the tree.

The underworld grapevine whispered that he had been put on the spot. This theory got an added boost a month later when three boys, playing on the bank of the East River in New York City saw a barrel lodged against a rock. They investigated, hoping to find something of value.

What they found was the body of a beautiful woman, completely naked, stuffed in the barrel. When the police took charge, they quickly learned that the pretty victim was Esther Gordon, the Russian wife of "One-Eyed" Maxie. There was no question how she had died. A knife had pierced her back and cut through her heart.

These two isolated murders, committed two thousand miles apart, painted a too familiar picture to the Federal agents. A new overlord of the dope underworld had arisen. Maxie Gordon and his pretty wife, who had ruled that underworld, had been dethroned in the customary manner—with murder.

Almost within sight of where the body of Maxie Gordon had been found is an island in the Rio Grande, called Cordova (Dead Man's) Island by the Mexicans. For twenty-five years it has been the focal point of all narcotics smuggling into the Midwest, and in recent years, according to figures given out by the Bureau of Narcotics, over 70 per cent of all dope coming into the States arrives over that narrow stretch of sand, three miles long and a mile wide.

The treaty following the Mexican war gave all land south of the Rio Grande to Mexico and all north to us. The muddy Rio Grande pulled a trick on the treaty makers, changing its course and forming the island, which belongs to neither us nor Mexico. The value of this strip of sand, owned by no country, is obvious. The border patrol could go on the island, make arrests, but when the smugglers were hauled up in court, they were promptly released because no crime had been committed on United States soil.

Mexican courts operate in favor of the smugglers in much the same way.

So smugglers took over the island, making it a fantastic kingdom of crime where you can murder (or commit any other crime) and yet break no law nor face any court.

In 1925 the dope underworld, then beginning to form syndicates, decided this island was their natural base of operation. They moved in, fought a pitched battle with the smugglers, killed most of them, and entrenched themselves and have been there ever since.

Lucky Luciano and his mob controlled the island—and the dope trade of the country—in the early Thirties. In 1937, when Lucky's kingdom crumbled with his conviction on charges of prostitution, Maxie Gordon stepped in and became the king of Cordova Island and overlord of the dope underworld. Then Maxie was murdered.

As is usual when a new overlord takes over, some time had to elapse after Maxie's death before the new pattern of operation became apparent. Within six months it became clear to the Federal officers: Kansas City was the main point of operation for the new syndicate.

Here are figures released by the Bureau of Narcotics to cover that six-month period in the Midwest. The number of dope addicts in small towns and cities increased 64.8 per cent. Some small towns showed alarming increases. The county-seat town of McPherson, Kansas, population 5000, had only 2 known addicts prior to the murder of Gordon. Six months later there were 67 addicts in the town.

Arrests of dope peddlers jumped over 300 per cent. The greatest increase of dope addiction among the young people was on the campuses of the colleges and universities within a radius of 200 miles of Kansas City.

The University of Missouri was hard hit. Such expressions as "Bang-up," "Speed-ball," "Down the stream," all used by young dope addicts, began to take the place of the usual campus slang. Cullen's roommate was caught in the throes of the habit and had to leave school.

A vigilante committee was formed and Cullen was on it, but it wasn't long until he saw that this committee could do little to combat the ravages of the dope habit. So he went to Kansas City, talked with United States District Attorney Milligan, who was a close friend, and who helped him through the university.

Milligan gave him a brusque turn-down. "This fight against dope isn't for college boys," Milligan told him. "Forget it and go back and graduate."

Cullen graduated, and it wasn't until three months later that Milligan saw him again.

WORDLY WISE



TO GET THE UPPER HAND

■ Gamblers of the 15th century had none of the complex devices favored by moderns. Dice were scarce, and even the tossing of coins was rare in regions where money was seldom seen.

So rural gallants developed a game of chance which employed no accessory but a stick. Thrown by one man to another, it was caught in his hand and held firmly. His opponent would then press a hand around the stick just above the point at which it was held; alternating hand-holds, they would move toward the top. Victory was achieved by the fellow who could get the upper hand—holding the stick without leaving room for his opponent to grasp it. If the man with the upper hand failed to throw the stick an agreed distance over his shoulder, he lost the wager.

This practice is at least seven centuries old—but still survives among sand-lot baseball players who use the bat to determine who must take the field for the first inning.

—by Webb Garrison

On July 27 Milligan sat in his office in the temporary Federal building at Locust and 9th Street. His secretary said, "Chief, there's a man outside you might want to see. He says he's a dope peddler and he looks like one. Got a scar on his right cheek and walks with a limp."

Milligan had had reports from his men about this new peddler. A minute later the peddler walked into his office. He wore an old raincoat, a gray felt hat, and there was a scar across his right cheek. He sat down without being asked. "You want info on the junk bein' peddled in this city?" he asked.

His brazen attitude puzzled Milligan, who said, "If you have information we can use it."

The youth got up, took his hat off. His hand went to his face, and when he turned around, Milligan was looking at George Cullen.

"George!" Milligan exclaimed.

"All right," Cullen said. "You told me to graduate and I did. Maybe I'm a fool, but just before I left school I looked at the face of a girl—a young student—who had committed suicide because of the dope habit. I don't want to be a hero. I want to do something to stamp this thing out. That's why I am here."

Milligan shrugged and then asked, "When did you start and what have you done?"

"I began three weeks ago at the Riverside Race Track. That's where

most of the small-time boys get their stuff. My make-up wasn't difficult. I wore this scar in a college play. The limp is easy."

"I hope you know what all this means," Milligan said. "It may seem easy at first when you're only a punk, but get a step higher and the first slip you make, you're dead."

"I know," Cullen replied. "But if I can fool you, I can fool any of them."

It had been easier with Milligan backing him, supplying funds to make large purchases of heroin and morphine. That was how he got to Tiny Abbe. Milligan had worried about this contact and had waited for him in his car at the end of the alley.

Early the next morning a government plane came out of the gray fog over the Missouri River and landed at the Kansas City airfield, which is in the center of the city. Harry Anslinger, who in 1940 was head of the Federal Narcotics Bureau and today is the United Nations Commissioner for Narcotics, stepped out of the plane with five of his best operators.

J. Bruce Greeson, supervisor of the Kansas City Bureau, and Milligan were there to meet him. These two officers had worked day and night trying to ferret out the mystery of the new syndicate which was turning Kansas City and environs into a field of dope.

The greatest mystery was the identity of the leader of this syndicate, the

new dope overlord. In the past, the Federal Bureau had always been able to pick up this information quickly, and it had made the fight to control the traffic easier.

There were other phases of the operation of this new ring equally baffling. Although millions of dollars in dope was being brought into the city, diluted and sold to peddlers, the Kansas City police had turned the city upside down without finding a trace of where it had been stored.

Greeson and Milligan phoned Washington for help, and the situation was serious enough for Commissioner Anslinger and his men to answer that call for help promptly.

The next four days were an important period of transition for Cullen—from a small-time Riverside Race Track buyer to a big shot in the dope underworld who bought his junk by pieces and who was something of a wholesaler himself.

This change brought certain complications. Being a pusher at the race track had been simple. He had bought his heroin and morphine in small papers, called "sniffs." They cost him forty cents a paper and sold for a dollar or dollar and a half. It didn't require diluting or putting into sniffs.

In those four days his reputation had increased to the point where two mixers offered their services and he hired them. They had rooms where they did their work. They made "speed-balls," morphine and heroin mixed, the heroin diluted with milk sugar. These were popular on college campuses. The next problem that faced Cullen was to find helpers who would take these off his hands. Not wanting to sell to peddlers, he recruited some of the former members of the vigilante committee at the university. They would meet him at the places where other peddlers could see them and take the stuff off Cullen's hands.

So much had happened in these four days that they seemed like weeks to Cullen. He had visited Tiny Abbe. The attitude of the fat man was puzzling. He sold Cullen what he wanted, but he said little and kept staring at him.

The next night Cullen walked out of the cheap hotel on Broadway which catered to small-time punks. He was wearing the felt hat, the cheap raincoat and the scar.

Halfway down the block the darkness in a doorway moved. Then this moving shadow took the form of Spike. He stood in front of Cullen, legs apart, a leer on his moon face, his right hand in his coat pocket. The barrel of the automatic was outlined by the cloth of the coat around the pocket like a sore thumb.



Three-hundred-pound Tiny Abbe was the first man fooled by the scarred disguise and limping walk of George A. Cullen, alias "The Kid." Later, Tiny was lucky to escape with his life.

"Okay, kid," Spike said, "you and me going to see Tiny."

The limp went out of Cullen's leg and his muscles tensed. His eyes measured the distance between him and the end of the automatic in Spike's pocket. It was only two feet, but Cullen decided the bullet would beat him by a good twelve inches.

"I got no business with Tiny tonight. I gotta shift the junk I got last night. I'll be ready for more in a couple nights."

"You're ready now, kid," Spike countered. "Tiny wants to talk to you . . . he's got ideas about you."

Cullen again measured the distance between him and the automatic and again decided the odds were too great against him.

"Let's talk to Tiny," he said. "I got things I wanta ask him."

TINY ABBE sat in a large easy chair, his three hundred pounds filling every inch of it. A dark-haired and dark-complexioned man sat on the footstool of the chair close to Tiny. Cullen was shoved into the room, within a few feet of Tiny.

"Here he is, Tiny," Spike said.

"Sit down," Tiny ordered.

Cullen looked around, saw a chair, limped to it and sat down. The two men came out of the kitchen carrying a tray of martinis. They served Tiny first and then the dark-haired man, then Spike and another man he recognized as Chips.

"Give the kid one," the dark-haired man said. "He'll need it."

Cullen took the martini, held the glass between his fingers without drinking.

"Got some gold for me tonight?" Tiny asked Cullen.

"My customers like speed-balls," Cullen answered. "That takes time, mixing the heroin and morphine. I want more junk in a couple of nights."

"He sells speed-balls to the college kids, Bossie," Tiny said to the dark-haired man.

Bossie Nigro was a powerfully built man, with a handsome face and eyes that popped like a man with a thyroid.

"Where did you get your morphine?" he asked Cullen.

"I had some, but the next time I gotta get morphine as well as heroin."

"Let's stop fooling, kid," Tiny's voice was wheezy. "What's the gag? Where'd you get the gold the other night?"

"I got plenty gold," Cullen retorted.

Spike walked to his side and said, "Sure, you got gold. The Feds give it to you."

Spike's hand came up palm open and slapped Cullen across the face. Cullen shook his head and as he did, his right leg stiffened, raising him from the chair, just enough for him to

send his right in a vicious short jab that caught Spike in the belly. Spike doubled up with a howl and Cullen's left came up in an upper cut that caught him flush on the chin, sending him stumbling back against the wall, his eyes stary.

Chips' gun came out, but he never got to squeeze the trigger. Bossie was off the stool and his right hand came down, caught Chips on the wrist, sending the gun flying high in the air.

"Take it easy, Chips," Bossie said. "The kid's okay."

Cullen stood there like a man who had suddenly gotten a reprieve from death. He had figured he was as good as dead when Spike slapped him, but he wanted to go down fighting.

Tiny exclaimed, "He lives up to his prison record. Sure, he's a tough one."

Bossie had a paper and he read from it: "Jim Sarks, 23, born in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Served three terms at age of sixteen in reformatory at Hutchinson, Kansas, for robbery. Released February 19, 1938. Arrested Oklahoma City for automobile theft. Sentenced to state penitentiary McAllister for three years. Paroled December 8, 1939. Wanted by Wichita police for robbery. Arrested Columbia, Missouri, for drunken assault under name of Charles Frank. Escaped from officers. Believed to be active in narcotics. Reward for his arrest \$500.00."

"That's the brief summary the boys got from the police department today," Bossie added. "The kid stacks up okay and we can use him."

Cullen sat down and lit a cigarette. His mind hadn't been able to keep up with what was happening. This was the first time he had heard that his name was Jimmy Sarks, that he had been born in Tulsa, and that he had served time. He didn't ask any questions. He inhaled deeply on the cigarette and for the first time in his young life knew how pleasant it felt to be alive.

"We got a place for you, kid," Tiny said. "We wanted to try you out to see if you had guts. What you are going to do will take guts, plenty of guts."

Spike was standing near the wall, rubbing his face. He wasn't happy about what had happened to him and he was glaring at Cullen.

"Spike and Chips will take you back to your hotel," Tiny added.

Chips handed Cullen his gun. His look wasn't any more friendly than Spike's. The three left the house. The ride to the hotel was a silent affair.

When Cullen got out, Spike said, "We'll meet again, kid. When a man clouts Spike, he doesn't live too long."

"Sure, we'll meet, Spike. Often, and you'll live and so will I. Tiny used you for a sucker tonight. Don't blame me."

Spike was staring at Cullen's face. He said, "I don't like little boys trying to play games. Maybe I won't have to kill you. Tiny does a good job of that himself."

The car pulled away. Cullen's fingers went to the scar on his face. They found nothing wrong. He

Man's Paradise

■ As our "Prince of Princes" for the month, we nominate Russell Arundel, Washington sportsman and owner of the principality of Outer Baldonia, a rocky islet off the south coast of Nova Scotia.

His is a country where all men are princes, admirals and knights. Where a man may indulge himself in boasting, swearing, drinking and gambling. Where he may be expansive and hilarious; and sleep all day and stay up all night. Where he is free from wife-questioning, nagging, politics and war.

In September of each year the princes resettle the islet at the time of the tuna tournament, startling the permanent residents—a few half-wild sheep—with their convivial gatherings.

All he-men desiring to be a prince may obtain tourist visas from the Outer Baldonia Legation, which is listed in the Washington, D.C., telephone directory. But it is only fair to warn you that no visas are granted to persons with inhibitions or without a sense of humor.

In a recent report on Outer Baldonia's foreign relations, the Canadian Department of External Affairs explained that Mr. Arundel built a clubhouse on the island. It serves as a sort of nineteenth hole for fishermen who compete in the annual International Tuna Tournament held off Wedgeport, N.S., every September.

turned and limped slowly into the hotel. . . .

The next day Cullen walked into Milligan's office. The scar and the limp were gone. He was wearing a sports jacket and looked the typical college youth.

"Well," Milligan said, "how is Jimmy Sarks, the boy with the long prison record?"

"So that's where I got my impressive police record?" Cullen laughed. "I suspected you had something to do with it. A neat idea. It saved my life."

"Everything helps in this game," Milligan replied. "I thought a prison record might help. What happened last night?"

Cullen gave the details of his visit to Tiny's home. "It's still a little mysterious to me," he concluded. "I am supposed to do some tough job for them. I got rough with Spike. He hates my guts now."

"Don't worry about Spike," Milligan said. "For some reason you're suddenly important to the syndicate. Spike isn't. We'll have lunch and discuss it then."

WHEN Cullen and Milligan got in the hall, an old man with a round and jovial face shuffled up to them, holding a bunch of dirty advertising cards in his hand.

He gave one to Milligan, saying, "Won't you help Papa by eating in his restaurant? My food is good, the best in Kansas City."

"Not today, Papa," Milligan said, taking one of the cards.

The old man shuffled away, handing

out his cards to anyone who would take them.

"That's Papa Donnici," Milligan explained to Cullen. "Quite a character, a nice old fellow. He has a restaurant on the first floor of this building. It's dirty and the food's terrible. The old man has long been known as 'The Mayor of 9th Street.' He drives around in a model-T Ford. Everybody likes him."

During the next two days Cullen saw signs of jumpiness in the dope underworld. They were vague and not definite at first. The small-time pushers couldn't get junk to sell. Tiny Abbe disappeared. Cullen was told to hold up everything until further notice.

Cullen laid this spell of the jitters to the presence of Commissioner Anslinger and his men in Kansas City, but when a week passed and the commissioner had uncovered nothing—and the mystery of the leader of the syndicate was as baffling as ever, it became apparent to Cullen that something big was under way, something tied in with Tiny Abbe's testing of his courage when Spike slapped him.

On August 1, Cullen got his answer to the mystery. It was something he had not expected and he had no time to contact Milligan. It had all the earmarks of a perfect death trap, but if Cullen tried to back out, the trap would snap on him.

Word was passed to him to go to the room on 12th Street. He did. A gray-haired man, in his fifties, and with a pock-marked face, was there. He sat on the couch and didn't bother to get up or introduce himself.

He said, "Kid, we got trouble down on the border and we need tough guys like you. You're leaving tonight. Spike will go with you."

Seven hours later Cullen and Spike walked off the plane at the El Paso airfield. Cullen was carrying a suitcase he had been allowed to pack hurriedly. The blackness of the night was slowly giving way to the misty gray of the coming dawn. A man walked up to Spike and said, "The car is over there."

Cullen sat with Spike in the back seat of the Cadillac. Spike didn't say anything. He hadn't said ten words on the flight from Kansas City to El Paso. But he seemed very satisfied and contented. The car crossed the International Bridge, went through Juarez, and onto a sandy road. The air had the penetrating chill of a desert night. It was still too dark to see much, but the powerful headlights outlined the sandy road and the mesquite growing close to it.

The Cadillac went ten or fifteen miles. Cullen could only guess the distance. The smell of the Rio Grande, a smell peculiar to that muddy and shallow river, filled the cold air. The car stopped. Shafts of gray were piercing the East like elongated and misshapen daggers.

Spike got out of the car first, and Cullen followed him. They walked through the shimmering darkness toward the river. A rope-swing bridge had been thrown across the river. Cullen had trouble crossing it and keeping his limp. When they got off the bridge a man came out of the gray darkness, said something to Spike, and Spike and Cullen followed him.

Dawn was breaking fast, with a blanket of rolling gray covering the white sand, pushing the darkness upward. This blanket enveloped the three as they walked, single file, across the sand which turned out to be part of Cordova (Dead Man's) Island. It is perhaps the bloodiest strip of sand in the country. On one night, for example, a hundred forty-eight men died in a pitched battle between the border patrol and the smugglers. Many others have died in similar battles, and nobody would even venture to guess the number of murder victims buried in the quicksands.

Corrugated iron sheds appeared in the dank mist. Men were around them carrying rifles in the croch of their arms. Others were crawling to the top of the sheds where they would lie on their stomachs and serve as sentries for the day.

Spike and Cullen were taken into one of the sheds. The interior was one large room with a board floor, a table, couch, and some chairs. A barrel-chested man with a touch of gray in his dark hair, and a heavy-jowled



face, got up. The man with Cullen and Spike said, "Here they are, Mike."

Mike wasn't talkative. He grunted something about them getting some sleep. Cullen said, "What's the play? I'm a pusher in K.C. and I'm sent down here. I got customers back there to take care of."

"How in hell do I know why you are here?" Mike answered. "You better get some sleep. You'll need it for tomorrow night."

The shack where Cullen was taken was small, had an old iron bed and a chair. It had been more than twenty-four hours since Cullen had had sleep. His body ached from exhaustion but he wasn't sleepy. The events of the night were too puzzling for that.

He had a feeling of apprehension he couldn't throw off. In Kansas City he was on home ground and he hadn't been nervous. It was different on this lonely island, and the moaning of the wind through the stunted cottonwoods and mesquite didn't help this feeling. Neither did his memory of Spike's actions.

Finally he dozed off to sleep. It was two o'clock when a man with a tray of food came in the shed and woke him up. The food was Mexican beans, tortillas, and black coffee. He ate hurriedly and then walked outside. The white sand of the island gleamed brightly in the sun. He saw one or two men around the sheds, but the island had the appearance of being totally deserted.

He wandered over the island and nobody appeared to stop him, yet he was conscious all the time that eyes were on him, watching his every step. As he looked back, he saw the sentries on the sheds, ready with their rifles to pick anybody off who ventured on the island. It occurred to him that these rifles could do a neat job of cutting him down if he made any false step.

As it was the dry season, there was little water in the north channel, which separated this few square miles of no-man's land from United States territory. The eastern part of the island is mostly quicksand, the burial ground for the victims of the dope underworld's wrath. Most of the cottonwoods and the mesquite were on the west end of the island, which was much higher.

Cullen didn't see Spike during the afternoon. He saw nobody but several guards loafing around the shacks. But with the first shades of evening the island came to life; slowly, at first, with a few men coming out of the shacks and the sentries on the roofs scampering down and others taking their places.

Within an hour a great movement of "wet-backs" across the river started. These peons, wading the shallow river,

remain the most economical way to bring the heroin, morphine, and cocaine across the Rio Grande. They are paid two pesos each—about 20 cents—for a night's work. Each carries around five ounces of the refined product in the rim of his sombrero. These broad-brimmed hats are especially made to float, so if anything happens to the wet-back his hat can be picked out of the river and the valuable cargo saved.

For each five wet-backs there is a guard who sees that they don't try to escape with the load of narcotics. The dope syndicate has learned there is far less loss using the wet-backs than trucks or planes. The ignorant wet-back has little knowledge of the value of the white powders he is carrying. Even if he did, he wouldn't know where to dispose of them.

The report filed with the United Nations on narcotics on May 27, 1953, has some interesting information about Mexico as the source of opium, from which is derived morphine, heroin, and cocaine. Within the past ten years Mexico has become a large producer of opium. Today it isn't necessary to import it from North Africa or Asia. The attitude of the Mexican government is very lenient toward the growing of these large poppy fields.

What the value of these poppy farms to Mexican farmers and the gov-

ernment is can be seen in the price of uncut morphine, cocaine, and heroin. It runs around \$5,000 a pound after it has been refined, and to the Mexican farmer it is by far the most profitable crop he can raise. After it is smuggled into the United States, it is diluted and retails for about \$23,000 a pound.

So a hundred wet-backs in one night could bring several hundred thousand dollars of uncut dope onto the island where it is stored in the corrugated iron sheds. Getting it into the United States is the big problem. A certain amount of it has to be sacrificed when the decoys sent across the narrow north channel into the United States are picked up by the border patrol.

While this is happening boats take the larger cargo down the river where fast cars are waiting to take it to Kansas City. As it is humanly impossible for the border patrol to cover every foot of the border, this form of smuggling had, up to the previous week, proved successful.

But something had happened during that week. Three large shipments being run ten miles below the island had been captured by the border patrol. All shipments were stopped while a new plan of smuggling was worked out.

That night Cullen knew little about this, but he did know something big



Nonchalant when he was booked, Bossie Nigro, another of Papa Donnici's wholesalers of dope, was sentenced to ten years in prison.

was in the air. He was with Spike and the barrel-chested Mike in a small shack waiting for orders which obviously would come from the big shed. This was guarded by a number of men and a cloud of mystery seemed to hang over it.

The grapevine rumors had spread over the island that the Big Boss was going to be on the island that night while the new system of running dope was worked out. Cullen stayed near the door of his shack.

Out of the misty darkness of the island came ten guards. They herded everybody outside sheds into them and slammed doors. The outline of a small, roly-poly man appeared behind them. A guard slammed the door in Cullen's face and growled, "Better stay inside."

In that split second Cullen knew he had the key to the whole syndicate in the palm of his hand, the key Angling and Milligan had worked so hard to find—the identity of the man behind the powerful dope ring.

Cullen's toe went against the door and his right hand turned the knob. The door opened a few inches, just far enough for him to see the small roly-poly man enter the large shed. He blinked in amazement, unable to believe his eyes.

It was Papa Donnici, the little man who had the restaurant on the first floor of the Federal building.

Cullen never got a second look. The huge fist of the barrel-chested Mike caught him on the side of the head and sent him crashing to the floor. He was yanked to his feet and a fist smashed him in the face and he went down in a cloud of complete darkness.

CONSCIOUSNESS came back slowly with a crazy jumble of thoughts. He opened his eyes, wondering where he was. Then he saw the leering face of Spike and he remembered everything.

Spike pulled him to his feet. "Okay, kid, you made the move that gave me the chance I been waiting for since you clouted me. I was suspicious about your scar then. It acted funny when I slapped you. We ain't got a mirror for you now, but when I clouted you your scar peeled off."

Cullen's fingers went to his scar. One end was loose. His head cleared and he could see the heavy face of Mike, and behind Mike was the man with the pock-marked face who had sent him to the island.

This man said, "All right, Spike, he's your dish. You and Mike take him out and take care of him. He didn't see anything through the door. We haven't time to bother to question him. The shipment leaves in a few minutes."

Outside the sand of the island was a blanket of white under the darkness. Cullen walked slowly, his feet crunching the sand. Spike was at his rear, his gun hard against his back. Mike was somewhere along side Spike. Cullen could hear the heavy sound of his feet in the sand.

Wet-backs were moving through the darkness, shuffling like ghostly apparitions. The chug of motor boats could be heard on the river, motor boats that were to be used as decoys for the border patrol.

Cullen was being taken to the east end of the island where the quicksand quickly hides the bodies of murder victims. A number of wet-backs came out of the darkness to their right, crossing the island for the north channel. They came silently, heads down and bare feet shuffling through the sand. They enveloped Cullen and Spike. Spike yelled at them in English but they paid no attention to him.

SPIKE's gun went away from Cullen's body. It was Cullen's one chance, not much better than twenty to one. He went down, face forward on the sand. His body barely hit the sand when it twisted in a half arc, came up on one knee, his right going out in a vicious blow.

It caught Spike in the groin and he bent over with a howl of pain. Mike's gun roared. There was a stinging, numbing sensation in Cullen's right side. His mouth was dry and his head was swirling in a hundred circles.

But he sent his body forward, putting every ounce of strength left in his right leg. His shoulder crashed into the legs of Mike before he could fire again. The big barrel-chested man went down in a sprawling heap, then Cullen was on his feet, running for the north channel with the wet-backs who had panicked with the roar of the gun and were running in all directions, some of them going for the channel. The blinding arcs from the border patrol's powerful searchlights darted over the channel. Spike and Mike were firing wildly. A wet-back near Cullen went down with a scream.

Somehow Cullen managed to get to the center of the shallow channel. He was spitting blood and everything was dancing in front of him. A numbness had come over his body; there was no feeling, no sense of existing except in a blur of dazzling circles that were whirling in front of his eyes. . . .

The next thing he knew he was lying on a couch in the barracks of the border patrol. Captain Bill McCann was standing over him.

"Mr. Milligan," Cullen whispered weakly. "Kansas City . . . United States District Attorney . . . I must

talk to him on the phone . . . I must talk quick."

Captain McCann got Milligan on the phone. He didn't even know Cullen had been sent to the border. "The man you want, Mr. Milligan," Cullen said weakly, "is Papa Donnici, that nice and sweet old man who handed us the cards for his restaurant . . . He . . ."

Everything went black and he didn't finish the sentence. One hour later in Kansas City Federal men raided the greasy restaurant run by Angelo Donnici. In the rear of the restaurant, under the offices of the Federal Narcotics Bureau, was found a large supply of heroin and morphine.

The next day Federal men were waiting for the roly-poly and smiling little Papa Donnici when he got off the plane from El Paso. Tiny Abbe and Bossie Nigro had already been arrested. Spike and the pock-marked face remained in Mexico and were never picked up.

The arrest of Tiny Abbe and Bossie Nigro broke the case. They quickly confessed, giving all the details of Papa Donnici's amazing plan to take over the dope traffic out of Mexico and his use of his restaurant as the secret headquarters.

The *Kansas City Star* is a conservative newspaper. A 48-point headline is a rare occasion for its front page. But the next day the entire front page of the *Kansas City Star* was taken up with the fantastic story of Papa Donnici and the dope syndicate. No mention was made of the work 22-year-old George Cullen had done in breaking the ring. That was a part of the confidential files of the Narcotics Bureau.

Six weeks later Cullen was discharged from the El Paso Hospital. Milligan was there to take him back to Kansas City.

"And now," Milligan said to him, "you're going to be a lawyer. No more undercover work for you."

Cullen laughed. "That's the last thing I ever want to do."

PAPA DONNICI was brought to trial in the Federal Court at Kansas City. He tried to put up a defense but the government's case caused the jury to bring in a verdict of guilty on the first ballot. The roly-poly Papa Donnici was convicted on two counts and was sentenced to 45 years in the Federal prison. Tiny Abbe got 15 years and Bossie Nigro 10.

The new Federal building in Kansas City is an imposing structure. There is no restaurant on the first floor. But the fight against dope still goes on, a relentless, deadly war, and when night falls over the white sands of Cordova Island wet-backs move stealthily and silently across that narrow strip of land no country owns. •



The Playmaker

Tonight was his last night,
and of course he wanted
to look good for his kid watching
the game on TV. But he
never expected to look this good.

By WILLIAM HEUMAN

It was four o'clock in the afternoon when Al McGee sat up on the couch. Usually he slept till nearly five the afternoon of a game, if it could be arranged, to give himself the energy he would need for the evening's entertainment. He hadn't slept because the kids were making a row out in the yard, and he could hear his wife scolding them, telling them to move to the neighbor's yard.

That was one reason why he hadn't slept; the other was more convincing, the reason he didn't sleep too well nights, either. Winding up his thirteenth straight season with the local Triangles, pro basketballers, he had the feeling that it was to be the last, and tonight when the Triangles tangled with the tough Warriors in the finale of the season might well be the last time he stepped into the rather gaudy red-and-gold Triangle uniform. That was hard to believe, and hard to accept after thirteen winters with one club, starting when they were play-

Illustration by BOB RIGER

ing in cheap dance halls before meager but rabid audiences, and ending in the Garden, itself, sometimes before capacity crowds.

He sat on the edge of the couch for a few moments, just looking down at the floor, and then he stepped to the dresser and took out a package of calous pads. Slipping off his socks, he affixed the small white pads to the many callouses on the soles of his feet—callouses which had come from twenty years of wearing sneakers, and starting and stopping, running endlessly on the hardwood floor. He wondered vaguely how many thousand miles he'd run in that time, and he had to grin, thinking that, perhaps, he'd gone clean around the world!

In his slippers he came out into the kitchen of this little suburban house which he'd bought and paid for out of his earnings as a pro cager. His wife was getting supper ready and the kids were still in the yard making a noise. She said to him,

"You sleep, Al?"

"Damn kids," Al said. He didn't mean it, though, as he sat down before the kitchen window and looked out at them—two of his own whom he loved more than life itself, and several neighbors' kids.

Little Irma, his baby, aged three, saw him and yelled happily. He waved to her through the closed window and grinned.

"Kids," he said softly. "Crazy kids. Always yelling."

"Want to eat now?" his wife asked.

"What?" Al asked her.

"Steak," she told him. "Rare."

"Maybe after tonight," Al told her, "it's back to soupmeat again, and glad to get it."

"Never mind that talk," Helen said crisply. "You made nine points the other night against the Brewers."

"They fed me," Al murmured, "out of pity—those college kids. They fed me."

"You're still with the Triangles," Helen observed. "When they drop you we'll talk about measures to be taken."

"When they'll drop me," Al said quietly, "is tonight, so we might as well start talkin' now. The house—"

"The house we'll keep," Helen said calmly. "If I have to get a job myself. No more living in a stuffy two-room apartment. These kids have gotten used to running around. They don't go back to the city again."

"I know," Al muttered. "I still got that application in with the high school here, but you know how tough that is. There's a million guys after coaching jobs today—even in the high schools, and all of 'em have a half dozen degrees. You got to be a col-

lege professor these days, to coach basketball."

"It'll work out," Helen told him. "You want to eat now or eat with the children?"

"I'll wait," Al said. "I got time."

The two children came in after awhile—Buck, aged eight, and a big boy for his age, and Irma. Al sat Irma on his knee. Buck had been in a basketball game in a neighbor's yard. They'd tacked up a hoop to a clothes-line pole. Al said to him,

"How many points you make?"

"Twelve," Buck told him proudly. "You keep that ball moving?" Al asked. "You didn't hog it because your old man is a pro player?"

"No," Buck grinned. "I like to pass."

"Okay," Al murmured. "Okay, champ." He put his arm around the boy, and he was thinking how quickly they grew up. You just look around and there they are almost up to your shoulder, and yesterday you were giving them piggy-back rides.

He sat there on the kitchen chair and he wondered what a pro basketball player did at the age of thirty-three when they gave him his release. He wondered why he hadn't thought about this when he was eighteen and big Tom Washbon, Triangle owner, gave him a try-out with the club.

You don't think when you're eighteen, Al McGee mused. Nor when you're twenty-two, or four, or six. The other side of thirty you begin to think, but then it's too late, and all you can do is worry and fret, and pray a little.

He watched Helen moving around the kitchen preparing the supper, and he was thinking of the days when she'd gone along with him to every game—those days before they were married and had children, and they'd danced after the game because in those days they had dancing between halves and after the game, and he could dance all night even after playing a Sunday double-header, afternoon and evening. He hadn't had callouses on his feet in those days, though.

As they ate little Buck wanted to know if he could stay up and watch the game on tv because it was Friday night and he had no school the next day.

"First half," Al told him. "After that, in you go."

"Suppose you don't get in the first half?" Buck wanted to know.

"Then," Al grinned, "maybe you'll be watching some good basketball."

Irma said she wanted to stay up, too, because Buck was staying up, but Al put his foot down.

"You kids will jinx me," he scowled in mock anger. "I won't get near the basket."

He left the house at six-thirty, taking the bus to the subway, and then the subway into the city. Callahan, the cop at the door of the players' entrance to the Arena, said, "Al," and lifted a big hand in greeting.

"Put that hand down," Al told him. "You'll knock yourself out, Marty."

Callahan grinned. "I got five on you bums tonight," he said, "an' you better be good."

"Any cop bets on a basketball game," Al McGee observed, "is a dumb cop. What's the point spread tonight, Marty?"

"Three points for you guys," Callahan told him, "but don't let it go to your heads. It's only because the Warriors won't be killin' themselves."

"Your money's safe," Al said, "if Tom puts me in there for a few minutes."

"And that's why I only put up five," the cop chuckled, "figuring Tom might stick an old man like you on the floor with them young whiz kids."

"If he does," Al vowed, "that point spread won't be a lousy three."

He went into the locker room, finding a few of the players already there in various stages of undress. The long, lean kid, Bill Watson, six foot seven and a half inches, waved to him from across the room and called, "How's it, Al?"

"Okay, Stringbean," Al told him.

Tony Armand went past him with a towel around his waist and gave him a playful dig in the ribs. "Old Al," Tony said.

"Hell with the old part," Al grumbled. "Ain't a one of you can keep up with me."

Thus was a young team, mostly first- and second-year men. Tom Washbon had built around his veterans the previous year, and then started to drop most of the veterans because they couldn't keep up with his new speedsters. He'd retained only Al McGee because Al had always been a floorman; he'd helped to keep that ball moving.

The other players drifted in as Al was getting into his red-and-gold Triangle outfit. Lou Weismann came in with Whiff Barnett, two second-year men, and veterans. Johnny O'Dea came down the aisle with Poke Rinaldo and Sam Walker.

Big Tom Washbon, veteran pro coach and owner, was already in his office, the door ajar. Al had seen him inside, chatting with several newspaper men. Washbon had played with the Triangles in the old days, finishing up just as Al came to the club. He was a big man with a shock of gray hair, and from what

Al remembered of him as a player, fast, aggressive, rugged.

Johnny O'Dea, coming down the aisle, deliberately kicked Al's sneaker away as he was about to pick it up and put it on.

"All right," Al growled. "All right, freshman."

O'Dea grinned. "Don't you wish you were still fresh, kid?"

"At fifty," Al told him, "I'll still run rings around you, buddy."

He saw the door of the office opening, and then the sports writer, Lee Carrington, came out, a cigarette in his mouth, that on the back of his head as usual. Lee was slender and blond, and a nice guy from the old days. He paused in front of Al's locker and he said thoughtfully,

"So the old warhorse goes to the well for the last time."

Al McGee was tightening his sneaker laces. He felt his throat suddenly tighten and his legs became weak. As he looked up at Carrington, though, he was smiling, and he said,

"You sound like a guy who knows something other people don't know."

"I do," Carrington told him, "and I can't say anything about it, yet, which is tough on a sports writer."

"So it's my last time," Al murmured. He'd expected it all along, and it was no real surprise. Tom Washbon had carried him all season, and now as they were closing out tonight, Washbon was releasing him. Still it hurt; still it was a shock.

"You can't go on forever," Carrington observed. "A guy would think you'd be glad to hang up those sneakers."

Al shrugged. "Okay, I'm glad," he said. He wanted to add bitterly, *I'm glad that I'm out of a job and that I have no means of supporting my family. I'm glad.*

He noticed that Carrington didn't seem too disturbed over the matter, and he knew why. The sports writer assumed he had a nice nest egg layed away for the time when he would be dropped. Carrington probably didn't know what it cost to raise children these days, and Carrington didn't remember that for the first eight years of Al McGee's pro career he'd played for peanuts as had all pro players.

"Make it a good one tonight," Carrington said, "if you get in there, Al. Like to see you boys dump those Warriors."

"Sure," Al nodded. "Okay, kid."

THE Warriors had already clinched first place in the league standings with the Triangles coming in third, which was very good for a young, inexperienced outfit. Next year Tom Washbon anticipated great things from these kids, but tonight they were winding up, and it would be

nice to dump the champion Warriors in this finale of the season.

Big Tom came out of the office just as Al was slipping into his nylon sweat jacket. Washbon came straight toward Al's locker, and Al thought miserably, *This is it—the axe.*

Instead, Washbon said quietly, "Wanted to ask you, Al. What do you think of Rinaldo? You've been out on the floor with these boys. You know them better than I do."

"Rinaldo," Al murmured. "He's a good kid, Tom, and he's coming fast."

"Is he a pro?" Washbon persisted. "Is he a Triangle, Al?"

"He'll make out," Al nodded. "A little wild right now, and maybe too fast for his own good, Tom, but he'll settle down, and you wanted speed."

The Triangle owner and coach nodded. "I wanted speed," he admitted. "I wasn't sure about this kid. You think we ought to hang on to him for next winter?"

"I would," Al said emphatically. "If somebody else gets him, Tom, you might have a guy who can murder you."

Tom Washbon seemed satisfied. "Okay," he said. "I wasn't sure, Al. Couldn't make up my mind."

HE went away, saying nothing about the release Al was expecting, and Al knew why. Tom was saving it for after the game because it wasn't good sense to tell a player before he went out on the floor that when the game was over he was finished, also.

They went out on the court, eleven strong, and the Triangle crowd gave them a hand. It wasn't the old pro crowd, however, which had followed the clubs in the cradle days of the game—that tough, rabid, partisan crowd which had, occasionally overflowed onto the floor, raking part in the all too frequent brawls which had marred those games.

This was a new crowd, a crowd which did not curse and jeer opposing players, and which wanted to see fast, clean basketball, the kind they'd become accustomed to in the collegiate games.

Al watched the big Warriors trailing out on the floor, every man on the squad well over six-two, and nothing gawky about them. He, himself, was an even six feet, and in the old days he'd been considered a fairly tall man. He and Rinaldo were the small men of this Triangle squad now.

They warmed up leisurely, taking their set shots, and then the referees came out on the court and the five Triangle regulars took off their sweat jackets and pants. Washbon started Watson, Tony Armand, Lou Weis-

mann, O'Dea and Whiff Barnett. The rest of them moved to the bench and sat down, Al taking a seat next to Poke Rinaldo. He said quietly as the players were lining up on the floor,

"When you go in tonight, Poke, take it easy. No wild shooting, and keep that ball moving all the time. None of that crazy college passing."

"Sure," Poke nodded, but he wasn't particularly listening.

AL MCGEE rubbed his hands. He said slowly, "Washbon asked me what I thought of you, Rinaldo. He's not too sure." He saw the Italian boy's head come around.

"What did you tell him?" Poke asked.

"I told him you'd make out," Al said. "Told him you'd settle down. Now don't make a dope out of me tonight."

Poke Rinaldo didn't say anything for a moment, and then he said softly, "Thanks, Al. I won't let you down."

"Go on," Al McGee growled.

The game got under way with Bill Watson getting the tap, pushing the ball to Tony Armand. They moved it downcourt without too much haste, getting the feel of the ball, watching the passing.

Lou Weismann slid into the bucket spot and they whipped the ball in to him and he tossed it out again, and then Whiff Barnett worked a nice screen for Johnny O'Dea, and O'Dea was in close enough for a set shot. He cut the cords with the ball and they had two points.

Al sat on the edge of his seat, enjoying it, admitting how much better these latter-day pro clubs were than the old clubs. A lot of old-timers wouldn't admit that as they bragged about the old days, but Al McGee had watched them in both eras. He knew.

The Warriors came back with four points from the floor, and then the speedy Tony Armand hit from inside, a beautiful lay-up after a bounce pass from Whiff Barnett. Then they fell back, covering nicely, switching with a smoothness Al had seldom seen on a pro court. It was a tribute to the coaching of big Tom Washbon—a stickler on defense in an age where defensive tactics were more or less ignored in the craze for high scores.

Long Bill Watson, hovering under the net, dropped in two hook shots and the Triangles were up in front again with the crowd yelling for them to trip up the Warriors.

Tom Washbon sent young Rinaldo into the game, and Al watched the collegiate carefully. Poke was on his mettle this evening, playing

carefully, calmly, letting the others do the shooting, and he looked good. In ten minutes of play the score was 19 to 16 for the Triangles, and Al was beginning to wonder if he'd get into this first half at all, or if young Buck would have to go to bed without seeing his father in action this night.

The thought struck him, then, that this was the last night Buck McGee would ever have the opportunity of seeing his father play basketball, and suddenly he wanted very much to play tonight and to show to his son that the old man had had something in his day. It wasn't much that he could leave the boy, but a memory was a memory, and Buck was at the age where he wouldn't forget.

There was a whistle on an outside ball, and then Tom Washbon called, "All right, Al."

Al jumped up like a freshman going into his first varsity game. He peeled off his jacket, nearly hitting Sam Walker in the eye with his fist, and Sam, the rangy colored man, chuckled.

"Save it for the game, Al."

"Okay," Al said. "Okay." He stood in front of Tom Washbon, and the Triangle coach said,

"In for Barnett, Al."

"Sure," Al said. "Okay."

He was out on the floor at the next whistle, full of pep, rubbing his hands, and the crowd gave him a good hand. Whiff Barnett grinned at him as he left the floor, and Lou Weismann slapped Al McGee's shoulder.

"Keep it moving," Lou said.

THE Warriors had just scored, and it was the Triangles ball under their own basket. They came upcourt, Al sprinting along the left side line, Red Fogarty, his man, picking him up. Red was six-three, a big boy, and very good. He said as he followed Al down the court,

"Take it easy, Al. I'm tired now."

Al grinned, stopped suddenly, and cut back, taking the ball from Tony Armand, flipping it to Rinaldo and then crossing the court to find Red Fogarty with him again. They were over the ten-second line now, and Al roamed under the basket, coming up the foul lane to take a bounce pass from Lou Weismann. He feinted Fogarty to the left this time, and then spun right, bounced once and then spun as if going up with a hook shot, but he saw Tony Armand streaking in from the right corner and he whipped the ball to Armand as he was up in the air, and Tony's lay-up was good for two points.

"Old Al," Armand grinned.

"Very smart," Red Fogarty said grudgingly.

It was the Warrior ball now coming the other way with Al backpedalling, keeping up with Red Fogarty, feeling for him with one hand as the other Warriors moved the ball out in front of this fluid Triangle defense.

The Warriors worked it into the bucket and out a few times, then their tall boy, Dick Henderson, tried a hook shot which rolled off the rim. Weismann recovered and the Triangles came upcourt very fast, but not with the crazy speed of the collegiates. The ball rather than the players moved fast.

Al handled the ball several times, and then cut for the basket after Lou Weismann had set up a screen for him. Red Fogarty yelled frantically for a switch as Al broke away from him, and the red-head was temporarily tied up by Weismann.

Another Warrior player darted at Al, but he already had Tony Armand's feed pass and he was going up high with the ball, nudging it gently through the cords for two points.

They had the television camera on him as he broke away from the basket, all smiles with the other Triangle players grinning, also. Long Bill Watson yelled at him,

"Nice going, Al."

He scored again a few minutes later, taking a bounce pass from Poke Rinaldo, and Poke whooped as Al's lay-up dropped neatly through the cords.

"High man," Rinaldo yelled, pointing a finger at Al.

Al just waved a deprecating hand at him. It felt good, though, to be scoring points tonight because usually he did not do too much scoring as he set up the plays and fed the other men. All of his life he'd been a feeder.

The Warriors scored from the foul line, and then the Triangles came up with the ball, and this time Al McGee noticed something very strange. Tony Armand, who was usually one of the top scorers for the Triangles, and who liked his points as well as any man, was in fairly close for a set shot, but instead of shooting it, he faked the shot, drawing Red Fogarty away from Al, and then he bounced the ball to Al who was close to the net, at the same time yelling,

"Shoot!"

Al couldn't miss the easy lay-up, his third two-pointer of the evening. He looked at Armand curiously after that, and Tony was grinning.

"Throw 'em up, Al," Armand yelled. "Keep throwing."

Bill Watson and Lou Weismann were grinning at him, also, and he suddenly got the point. They were feeding him tonight; they intended

to build him up to the high scorer, probably because all of them realized he was on the way out and they wanted to give him a big send-off. It was a nice gesture and he appreciated it, especially with young Buck looking at it this evening.

"Crazy kids," Al muttered.

He scored again with Lou Weismann screening for him beautifully, and Red Fogarty trying to get around Lou to block the shot, and then at a Warrior time out Al said tersely, "You guys trying to make a hero out of me?"

Johnny O'Dea back in the game for Rinaldo, said innocently, "You're hot, Al. You're scoring points."

"And you guys are feeding me," Al growled. "Knock off and play basketball."

"When a guy's hot," Tony Armand observed, "it's the custom to feed him, Al. You know that."

"All of a sudden I'm hot," Al McGee scowled. "For about twenty years I'm cold. What the hell goes here?"

Armand shrugged. "We want to win, Al," he said.

THE whistle blew and they lined up again. At half time Al had thirteen points to his credit, the biggest total he'd had in seven or eight years with the Triangles. Tom Washbon let him finish out the half. He said, straight-faced, when Al came in at the end of the half,

"Somebody give you a shot in the arm, Al?"

"Stop kidding, Tom," Al muttered.

"You know what's going on here."

Washbon said casually, "Might as well stay in a while next half, too, Al, now that you got the range." He added, "If you want to call anybody up and tell them."

Al McGee got the point. Tom Washbon knew about his family; he knew Helen well, and he knew that young Buck often watched the games on television—at least for the first half.

After changing his jersey and drying his face with a towel, Al stepped out into the corridor and into the pay phone booth. He got Helen and he said,

"Buck gone to bed, yet?"

"Not yet," Helen told him. "He's getting ready, but he doesn't like it. He says you're the high scorer tonight."

"Let him stay up," Al told her. "I'm a hero."

"What goes?" Helen asked curiously. "I've been watching it, too."

"They want to make the old man feel good," Al said, "before they give him the axe. You know how they fatten up a turkey before Thanksgiving?"

"It looks on the level," Helen murmured.

"Sure it's on the level," Al explained. "It's just that these kids here are holding up their own shots, and breaking their necks to spring me loose for the easy ones."

"Why?" his wife asked.

"They're nuts," Al told her. "They're crazy as loons."

BACK ON the floor the start of the second half it was 33 to 29 for the Triangles, and Al McGee, with the aid of four other Triangles, continued where he'd left off.

The disgusted Red Fogarty, who knew what was going on, said grimly, "It's a frame-up. These guys are trying to make me look bad. You haven't scored this many points in three seasons, Al."

"Shaddup," Al told him. "Stop crabbing, Red."

The Triangles whipped the ball around the court, working it inside the ten-second line, moving it in to Bill Watson or Weismann in the bucket, working it out, and waiting for Al to get loose for a fairly good shot. When Red Fogarty guarded him too closely, Fogarty found himself bumping into a Triangle player, and Al McGee made good use of these stationary screens. When he broke for the basket they fed him and he didn't miss too many. His total went up to eighteen and then into the twenties, and the crowd began to yell.

In the beginning he whipped some of the balls back to the other players, but they smilingly held up their own shots to feed him at another time, and because the game didn't mean too much one way or another, Tom Washbon didn't object.

The Triangle coach let him play the entire half, the first time he'd played a full half in two years, and when the gun went off—and Al was glad because he was beginning to stumble a little from weariness—he'd piled up thirty-one points, and they'd beaten the Warriors by a 75 to 69 score.

Al picked up his jacket, his face sweaty, his feet and legs hurting badly. He looked at the grinning Triangle players, swarming around him, slapping his back, and he said grimly,

"Everybody happy now?"

"You're the big wheel tonight," Tony Armand told him.

And now off comes the head, Al thought, but it was worth it. Young Buck had had a good show. He'd seen his old man rack up thirty-one points with the crowd cheering him on, and Buck would remember that in years to come. He wanted to thank these guys for that, but he

didn't know how to do it; there were no words, and all that he could say was,

"You're nuts; you're all crazy."

When he reached the dressing room he saw Tom Washbon standing by the office door, and big Tom hooked a finger at him. His jacket across his shoulders, Al walked over on leaden legs, knowing what was coming. He could hear the yells and the good-natured talk of the other players in the shower room. It was over for them for the season and naturally they felt good. For him it was over for good, and he knew it. Tom Washbon had to break the news to him, and probably Washbon didn't like that part of it, either.

Al stepped into the office and Washbon closed the door behind them. It was quiet in here. The big Triangle coach and owner scratched his jaw and sat down on the edge of the desk. He said,

"You had a pretty good night tonight, Al."

"Stop kidding," Al growled. "Give it to me straight, Tom. I know why I'm here."

Tom Washbon nodded. "Guess you know you're about at the end of the line as an active player, Al."

"I know it," Al McGee murmured. "I've known it all season, Tom. I'm obliged to you for carrying me."

"I had my reasons for carrying you," Tom Washbon told him. "Want to hear them, Al?"

"I know 'em," Al said quietly. "I'm

an old Triangle and you gave me a break, Tom. Thanks for it."

"That's one reason," Washbon admitted. "The other is that I've wanted to groom you for taking over this job, Al. I won't be on the bench next year. I'll be doing the office work for the Triangles. I want you to coach this club, Al. They think a lot of you and they'll work like hell for you. I saw that tonight."

Al McGee was staring at him. "Coach?" he mumbled.

Tom Washbon smiled. "I've already given the release to the papers," he stated. "I was that sure that you'd accept, Al. Don't disappoint me."

Al sat down in one of the three chairs in the room. "I don't feel good, Tom," he muttered.

"You want the job?" Tom Washbon asked him.

Al grinned a little. "Like Grant wanted Richmond," he said. "Like Taft wanted to be president."

Tom Washbon put a hand on his shoulder and then pointed to the phone on the desk. "Maybe you want to call up Helen," he said. "This is your office, Al." He went out of the room.

Al McGee sat there for fully five minutes just staring at the opposite wall, and then he put both feet up on the desk and he reached for the phone. He said softly to the operator,

"Lady, this is the King. Get me the Queen."

DUSTER

Plenty of stories have been told about The Lip and his troubles, but this one is little known. Durocher tried very hard indeed in 1952 to avoid any kind of suspension. He didn't quite make it, of course, but he was in the "shower" considerably less than most diamond enthusiasts expected.

There's reason to believe, however, that Leo got a bum rap during one joust—a heated Dodger-Giant daylight game at the Polo Grounds on September 8, 1952. When a few dusters were served up, the umpires told both managers they'd be responsible for so much as one more errant pitch. The National League prexy, Ford Frick, had just warned the umpires and the entire league that the deliberate noggin-chucking must cease. Leo reminded the men in blue, "My Larry Jansen is working out there with a sore back so if—"

"Cut it!" The Lip was warned. "Another bean-ball and you get suspended. Those are our orders. Now let's get on with it."

Maybe another manager would have removed Jansen, who, it was true, had suffered back trouble throughout the season and was therefore nowhere near his 1951 form when he won 23 for the Giants and helped them to a pennant. Sure enough, a pitch got away from Larry, striking batter Billy Cox in the seat of the pants. As Cox, grinning, trotted toward first, Durocher was thumbed out of the game and suspended for a few days. He had only one livid comment as he left the field. "That's a bean-ball!"

—Ray Ferris

STEADY EDDIE

Illustration by AL GABRIELE

Ed Cook? Now there's a guy for you; as normal as apple pie. The All-American boy. Feet firmly on the ground. Yeah. . .

■ By ARTHUR MYERS



When I first became acquainted with Ed Cook, he impressed me as the most normal fellow I had ever known. In fact, he seemed almost too normal. It hardly seemed normal to be that normal.

That was when I was in college. Ed had been a member of my fraternity. He was about 30 then, a short man with sandy hair and a smooth, rather handsome face. He lived in town and we saw a good deal of him around the house. He was an Active Grad; in fact, a trustee of the chapter.

He was especially in evidence during rushing time. Ed was an insurance agent, and a successful one. Not too successful—that wouldn't be normal. But he was an ideal front man for the freshmen we were trying to impress. With his neat, well-kept clothes and his neat, well-kept face, Ed could have just stepped, alive, out of a men's clothing store window. He was the very model of a college graduate; still young; resigned, even happy, in his lot; a credit to his community.

Ed had a Little Wife, a Nice Girl named Miriam. They had met at college, married on graduation day. They had two children, a boy and a girl. They belonged to the local country club—Ed shot in the nineties. He also belonged to a commercial club and a couple of fraternal groups. Rather more gregarious than the average, perhaps, but that was normal for an insurance salesman.

When I graduated I expected I might never see Ed again. But about five years later I met him in a restaur-

rant in New York. The moment he entered the place there was no mistaking him—he hadn't changed a hair. Behind him trooped Miriam and the two kids. When he spotted me he gave me the Glad Hand.

"By gosh, fella, how's tricks?" he cried.

"Oh, pretty good."

"What are you doing now?"

"Oh, I'm working here in New York, for an ad agency," I replied.

"Is that right?" He paused a moment and his face became Serious, Thoughtful. "It's terrible the way we lose track of each other."

"Yeah, you're right."

He turned to Miriam. "You remember Herb Jackson." She said she did. The boy gave me a manly handshake, and the girl a pleasant self-posessed smile.

"We've got to get together more often," Ed said.

"Yeah, we ought to."

"Coming back on Homecoming Day this year?"

"Well—if I can make it."

"You make it this time." A strong handshake, a Level, Friendly gaze, and Ed was gone off to eat his roast chicken and out of my life again.

I did get back to Homecoming that year. Before long, I realized something was missing. "Where's Ed Cook?" I asked.

The group was suddenly silent. The faces went blank, striving for gravity to mask the excitement and sheer joy beneath. Scandal was in the air.

After a decent pause, Jack Hoffman, a contemporary of mine, cleared his throat and said, "Ed disappeared three months ago."

"Disappeared?" I echoed.

"Disappeared." Into thin air." Hoffman made a gesture to indicate thin air.

I gaped in astonishment. I couldn't conceive of Ed disappearing from the face of the earth except through the normal, formal rites of burial, and then only when he had reached the proper age, according to the actuarial tables.

"It must have been foul play," someone said.

"The police haven't found a body," someone else said.

"It could have been amnesia," Hoffman said.

There was a general nodding of heads. That was a respectable, face-saving, fraternal explanation. But there wasn't a man there who didn't strongly suspect that Ed Cook had just said the hell with it and taken off in the middle of a Tuesday. It was a comforting thought, somehow.

DURING the next four years I often thought of Ed Cook. Much more often than I would have had he not done his disappearing act. Things are not what they seem, I would muse. Beneath the most placid, ordinary-seeming stream lurk strange currents. My thoughts on Ed brightened many an hour on commuter trains and within the four walls and a window that was my place of work. Then one day I flew across the country, to San Francisco, on business.

I went to my hotel and checked in about two in the afternoon. Then, deciding it was too late to work, I embarked on a stroll about the downtown section of the city. I was walking down Market Street, pretty much at loose ends, when suddenly I stopped short, my heart pounding. For coming toward me was Ed Cook!

He was dressed in his usual neat business suit, complete with brief case. His expression was as bland and uncomplicated as ever. He hadn't changed a particle. I started toward him, a shout on my lips. Then I hesitated: Would he welcome a meeting with someone who had known him when? Then he saw me, and knew I had recognized him, and the decision was out of my hands. He strode toward me, his hand outstretched and his Hail Fellow smile expanding on his lips.

"Herb Jackson!" he exclaimed. "It's a small world!"

"Sure is," I replied.

"This calls for a drink," he said.

"Sure does."

He steered me into a small grill nearby and sat me at the end of the bar. It was quiet and cool there. The bartender, a tall, florid man, mixed us a pair of highballs.

Ed beamed at me. "What are you doing out here, fella?"

I could restrain my curiosity no longer. "What in hell are you doing out here, may I ask?"

He took a long pull on his drink, then inspected the glass carefully. "Oh, I just got tired of the old squirrel-cage routine. I suppose I wanted adventure. So I came to San Francisco. I'd always heard it was a romantic town."

He gave me a sidelong glance. "I'd appreciate it if you kept quiet about seeing me. Miriam has married again, and I've got my life here. It wouldn't be a good thing to drag it all out."

"Okay," I said, "I'll keep my mouth shut."

He drained his glass quickly. Suddenly he seemed anxious to get away. "Well, gotta run," he said. He thrust out one hand and grasped my elbow with his other one. He flashed his Smile. "We gotta get together more often," he said. He was halfway to the door before I could answer.

THE bartender came over. "Anything else, sir?"

"Yes, another drink."

He brought it to me, then settled down on a stool behind the bar opposite me. I was the only customer in the place, and he seemed lonely and in a talkative mood.

"You a friend of Mr. Brown's?" he asked.

"Mr. Brown? Oh—er, yes, that is, I used to be."

The bartender nodded. "Nice fellow, Mr. Brown. Wish I had more customers like him, instead of the screwballs I usually get." He picked up a rag and gave the bar a swipe. "He gives a little tone to the place. Steady. Know what I mean?"

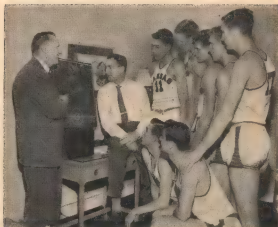
"I think so," I replied.

"I mean he's the quiet, well-dressed, business type," the bartender went on. "Insurance agent, married, a couple of kids, belongs to the Marin Country Club, owns his own home in Oakland. Nothing erratic about him. In fact, he's probably the most normal guy I've ever met."

I finished my drink. "Yeah," I said, "he's at least twice as normal as any guy I ever met."



Phog teaches a hard-driving game that differs sharply from the Eastern style of play, which he scorns as lousy basketball.



Phog's pre-game technique makes full use of the fans' hatred for him. By the time the players reach the floor, they hate everyone in sight.

most hated man in Basketball

And the
most successful.
But as to
which came first,
Phog Allen won't talk.

By JOHN S. PHILLIPS

The cat-calls and Bronx cheers were scattered at first, changing slowly into an intermittent roar of booing hisses. The recipient of this was Phog Allen, coach of the Kansas basketball team which had just won the N.C.A.A. championship against LaSalle College in Madison Square Garden on the night of March 21, 1952.

Phog had stepped on the court to receive the usual congratulations when the unfriendly demonstration started. It seemed to amuse him and he clasped his hands over his head like a prize fighter, and waved his greetings—and heartfelt thanks—to the booing crowd.

As a matter of record, it must be admitted Phog had plenty of reason to thank these irate fans. For a half a century this controversial figure in basketball, called by many the most-hated man in the game, has made hate pay huge dividends in games and championships won.

If there is any doubt about this, take a look at the record. In his 43 years of coaching, his teams have won 730 games and lost 209. He has been at Kansas 36 years and has taken 23 Big Seven conference titles.

To Phog the Madison Square Garden demonstration probably wasn't too impressive. They do such things far better out in the Middle West where the appearance of Phog and his team on certain courts in the Big Seven is always

the signal for a demonstration that makes the New York outburst look mild, decidedly tepid.

The boos there reach a great crescendo when Phog, leading his team, steps out on the court. Phog always picks the far end to make his entrance, and he walks slowly, with measured steps, giving his boys a chance to become thoroughly saturated with the fury of the crowd.

At this far end he stops, turns and faces the team, and says, "At'm boys." He doesn't need to say anything more. These young Jayhawkers are convinced that every man, woman, and child is against them—and against Phog—and they go out fighting like wild beasts.

There have been occasions, several of them, when the police had to be called out to protect Phog and his team, and such a thing as slashed tires on a cold and wintry night hasn't been uncommon.

Several years ago the situation got so bad at Kansas State that President Dr. Milton Eisenhower gave the student body a stern lecture on good sportsmanship before the Kansas-Kansas State game at Manhattan. That night when Phog and his boys walked out on the court, the crowd arose as one and greeted them with a resounding and very friendly cheer.

Phog was puzzled, completely thrown off balance, and he acted like a man in a daze, unable to comprehend what was happening. The Kansas team must have felt the same way, because that night they were badly beaten.

Two generations of sport writers have filled the columns of their pages with stories about Phog, giving an over-all picture of a braggart, something of a nut, a publicity-seeker who goes to any length to get his name in the papers.

Actually Phog is none of these, despite his actions and words. He is a shrewd, calculating coach with a brilliance that often has a touch of cunning. Raised in the old-time rough and tumble school of coaching where a man was supposed to win games no matter the tactics used, he has never made a move, delivered a speech, or pulled one of his tricks without considering how it will affect his team.

Meeting Phog for the first time, you are certain you are looking at a Dr. Jekyll-Mr. Hyde. Away from the basketball court he is Dr. Forrest C. Allen, a genial and personable Irishman with pleasant and gracious manners, a well-modulated voice despite his nickname. He is in his late sixties, but has the ruddy complexion and the manner of a man in his forties. In dress he seems to prefer imported tweeds that run to green colors, plaid

socks and flashy ties, and usually there is a small green feather in his hat.

"I have been booed longer and more fervently than any man in basketball," Phog admits, with a touch of pride. "It's been a part of the game to me, and I've learned that 'Whom the Gods would destroy, they first make angry.'"

Phog Allen profited much from this kernel of wisdom at the tender age of nineteen when he was a player on the Kansas City Athletic Club basketball team. It wasn't an outstanding team, considered third-rate even in the West, but to Allen it was the greatest in the country.

The Buffalo German-Americans, the national champions, were touring the West, and he issued a blistering challenge, via the columns of the *Kansas City Journal*, to them to come to Kansas City and play his team for the championship.

The national champions were mildly amused, as were most people in the basketball world, but the running attack continued until the German-Americans decided the only way to shut the youngster up was to go to Kansas City and pummel the Kansas City team—and this upstart in particular.

They arrived at the old Union Station in Kansas City to find a broadside against them in all the Kansas City papers, the contents of which were sufficient to make a wooden Indian sear. The German-Americans were so furious they barely defeated the Kansas City team, winning by the narrow margin of 30-28.

A second broadside greeted them the next morning, this one was filled with sneering remarks about their poor playing. That night they lost by two points, and this brought forth a scathing, virulent broadside that had the German-Americans frothing at the mouth. They lost the third and deciding game by the crushing score of 45-15, and with it the national championship.

In this last game Allen made 25 of the 45 points scored by Kansas City. One item, not often mentioned, might explain more in detail the reason for his amazing playing—and his vitriolic broadsides. The German-Americans had insisted on a \$500 guarantee, a sum difficult in 1904 to raise for any sporting event. Allen overcame this by announcing he had five prominent citizens ready to guarantee that amount.

They signed readily, but all five would have had serious trouble raising ten dollars if all their assets had been consolidated and the clothes sold off their backs. Victory was the only thing that got Allen out of an embarrassing jam. Kansas City was thrilled with having a national championship,

even if it was basketball, and the money was readily raised.

This amazing championship brought him national fame and started him on his long and tumultuous career as the storm center of basketball. Since then he has managed to keep the basketball world in such a turmoil with his blistering attacks that his very real ability as a coach is often overlooked.

Of recent memory to fans is Phog's arrival in the East on December 15, 1951, with his team scheduled to play St. John's. The basketball world had had one of its brief periods of quiet. Many of the notables gathered at a dinner in Boston where Phog was to give an after-dinner talk, something he does very well.

He jarred his listeners with a charge that basketball as played in the East was a game of rowdies and hoodlums, with all the rules and the game officials in their favor, and that a Western team, to beat an Eastern one, had to be twenty points better.

With this attack being broadcast over the country on the sports pages, Phog went to New York City to prepare the public for the game with St. John's the following night. Phog's verbal thrusts are always good copy for the sports pages, so the next morning the New York fans read an enlargement of the charge he made in Boston, and with it a blunt statement that his team had no chance to win because all the cards were stacked against them.

His comments about the St. John's players and Coach McGuire had the St. John's team seething mad when they stepped on the floor, which is exactly what Phog wanted, because St. John's had a fast team, one of the best in the East, and should have defeated Kansas.

But Kansas won by a score of 61-60.

As a parting thrust at McGuire and the St. John's players, Phog called them alley cats and hoodlums who didn't know the first principle of clean playing.

With all his ranting and raving, Phog never needles officials or the rival players during the game. He sits on the bench something like a dove of peace—a nervous and jumpy dove. He once described those minutes of watching a game as "the most exhilarating hell ever experienced by man." He twists and squirms, and at times gives the impression of a man in a convulsion. Water is the one thing that sustains him and he drinks copiously during a game, sometimes as much as eight quarts.

The water sits at his side, in quart milk bottles, and the number of bottles is a barometer for the kind of game to expect. Out on the campus of the University of Kansas, a four-

bottle game is nothing to get excited about, but if the grapevine says Phog will have eight bottles at his side, the gym is packed and the students expect a humdinger of a game.

Phog's sportsmanship in victory and defeat can best be described by the cryptic statement Winston Churchill is alleged to have made about Field Marshal Montgomery: "Glorious in retreat, magnificent in defeat—insufferable in victory." If the Kansas team is defeated, Phog rises from his chair, walks straight to the rival coach, shakes his hand, and his congratulations will be profuse. To the reporters his praise of the players on the winning team will be sincere and generous.

In victory the pattern undergoes a radical change. He receives the plaudits of his fans and friends with the beaming smile of a small boy and seldom bothers to thank them. If the rival coach congratulates him, Phog shrugs and says nothing. His appraisal of the losing team is never complimentary, as witnessed by New Yorkers after Kansas defeated St. John's.

HATE has not been Phog's only weapon in his long fight to turn out winning teams. One point usually overlooked in his background is his record as a basketball player at Kansas City and later at the University of Kansas. He was the outstanding player in his day, making a record of 37 points scored in one game that stood until 1940, when William Engleman scored 43 points. In every All-American selection from 1904 to 1909, he headed the list. Many authorities still believe he was the greatest player of all times.

It was while he was under Dr. Naim Smith, the founder of the game, that Phog got his nickname. To make extra money he umpired baseball games, and because of his booming voice when he called "balls" and "strikes" he was called "Foghorn." This was later cut to "Fog," and it was Ward Coble, sports editor of the *Daily Kansan*, the university newspaper, who added the "P" to it.

One morning the paper came out with "Phog" Allen. Coble explained, "Fog was too common. It needed dolling up. You see I have a nickname that nobody has been able to improve. I hate nicknames and don't like them unless they have some class."

Coble's nickname was "Pinhead."

Rival coaches have plenty to fear from Phog, but the one thing that gives them all a case of the nerves is the fact that despite his sixty-some years, Phog is the youngest coach in the country as far as new ideas and new systems of play are concerned.

In 1912 Phog could have retired with the knowledge he had revolu-

tionized basketball coaching. On his graduation from Kansas in 1910, he entered the Kansas City School for Osteopathy, fully intending to take up osteopathy as a profession. Unfortunately for this field of therapy, the Kansas City School had a large gym, and Phog spent all his spare time in it. It was here that he perfected his pass, pivot and angle pass, the basis for his famous "Stratified Transitional Man-for-Man Defense with the Zone Principles," which did much to revolutionize basketball coaching.

Prior to the introduction of this system of playing, a basketball game was usually a melee, with everyone going after the one opponent who had the ball. The results were continuous pile-ups and very low scores.

Under Phog's new style of play, each player would cover the man on the opposing team who held the corresponding position and zone; this man-for-man defense eliminated the pile-ups. By using the pass, pivot and angle pass on the offensive, his teams would get the ball under their opponents' basket while the opposing players were still running around, not knowing who had the ball.

When Phog graduated as an osteopath and was admitted to practice in Kansas and Missouri, he was thinking too much about this system to bother to open an office. He accepted the position of coach at the Warrensburg (Missouri) Teachers College, and used this type of playing to win 114 games. He lost only 7.

Phog is hardly the type to rest on his laurels. Within a few years, when rival coaches had solved this new system, he kept developing new and dazzling variations that kept them off balance.

The basketball world got a striking sample of this last year. There was rejoicing in the rival camps of the Big Seven, because Phog had, by graduation, lost his great Lovelette, not to mention other valuable players. So coaches, players, and fans licked their chops at the prospects of what would happen to the Jayhawkers and Phog.

The season started with their wishes fulfilled. Kansas lost to Kansas State and then took a 79-58 drubbing at the hands of the Oklahoma Aggies. Colorado set the Jayhawkers back on their heels with a 72-69 victory.

THEN something happened. The Big Seven and other teams over the country aren't quite sure today what it was. It came unexpectedly, like a cyclone, out of a clear sky. The Kansas team journeyed down to Manhattan to play Kansas State, which had won the first game with the Jayhawkers easily. But at the end of this game the stunned and dazed Kansas Aggies blinked in amazement when they

looked up at the scoreboard and read: Kansas 80—Kansas State 66.

Actually what Phog unleashed in that game was a variation of the Press defense, which had been used for several years in the East and the South. In it the players pick up their opponents in the back court, or mid-court, stick to them like leeches, preventing them from getting an offensive started, keeping them off balance, crowding them like a smart boxer crowds an opponent to prevent a knockout blow.

Phog's new Press defense was a double-barreled system with two men crowding the man with the ball, never letting him throw or pass it. There were also other wrinkles new to a basketball court, such as a new form of arm and hip work, done in unison. All in all, it was something nobody had ever seen before—and rival coaches are frank to admit they don't know how to solve this defense.

With it, Phog's Jayhawkers, a mediocre team at best, baffled the opposing teams, making it impossible for them to run or get an offensive started, leaving them floundering hopelessly on the court. To do this Phog had to use every reserve player he had and Kansas averaged 25.1 personal fouls a game, which is something of a record itself.

But Kansas swept forward to take the Big Seven title and lost the chance to win the N.C.A.A. title two years straight by one point in the game with Indiana. Statistics for the season show Kansas won 19 games, lost 6, scored 1,813 points, an average of 72.6 per game.

THE most mysterious and inexplicable thing about Phog and his coaching are his "brain waves," as they are called on the campus at Kansas University. An expert on dream analysis might call them something else, and a psychiatrist would probably have still another name.

Most of you probably will put your tongues in your cheeks when you read this, but at the University of Kansas they swear they really happen. These weird and spooky mental phenomena (you can call them whatever you wish) usually come to Phog while asleep, between the hours of two and five in the morning. Some, however, pop into his brain during a tense moment of a game.

One of the most famous of these wasn't connected with basketball. In 1920 Phog was given the added job of coaching football. The team that year was called "The Kansas Midgets," averaging only 162 pounds, the lightest team in the school's history. They were scheduled to meet the powerful Iowa State eleven the next day and it was generally believed if Kansas held the Iowa team to a three-touchdown

victory, they would have accomplished the impossible.

That night in his sleep Phog saw an aeroplane flying over his head. The Kansas team was in it, but only six of the regulars. The other five were second-string players. The plane was at the 40-yard line, and it turned to the right, veered back to the left and then flew over the goal line and out of sight. Phog awoke, jumped up, and jotted down the route the plane had taken.

That afternoon the Kansas rooters were amazed to see the Kansas team made up of six regulars and five substitutes. On the first play, the ball was given to the speedy halfback, Harley Little, who followed the exact route taken by the plane to race seventy-yards for a touchdown. This dazzling run inspired the light Kansas team and they held the heavy Iowa State players and won the game.

They tell you at Kansas that before the game Phog handed three close friends the route of the plane in his dream, and told them this was the route Harley Little was to take on the first play from scrimmage.

One of his greatest "brain waves" came in the last few seconds of the game between the Trojans of Southern California and the Kansas Jayhawkers for the National Championship in 1940. Phog had a small and light team that year and the Trojans were tall, fast, and considered the number-one basketball team of the country.

At the end of the first half, to the surprise of everybody, including Phog himself, the light Kansas team had held the Trojans to a score of 21-20 and then, with only 40 seconds left to play in the game, Kansas surged ahead, 41-40. This lead quickly faded when Lippert, the All-American Trojan forward, hit the basket with a long throw and gave the Trojans a one-point lead.

Kansas got the ball, lost it on the rebound when an attempted goal failed, and the Trojans froze the ball with the clock ticking the remaining seconds away. The Kansas players, following Phog's coaching, leeches on to their opponents at the same relative time, regardless of distance, leaving none free.

Phog was experiencing the most exquisite hell he had ever known in a game. He closed his eyes, and the brain wave came. He saw his son Bob, the sparkplug of the Kansas team, running wild away from a man. Phog's eyes snapped open and he yelled, "Run, Bob . . . run . . . start running, start running!"

It may be a little difficult to follow exactly what happened in those few seconds. Bob heard his father, was

puzzled at his instructions since they violated one of Phog's cardinal rules in a freeze, but Bob did as ordered and started running away from the man he had been covering, certain that his father was suddenly crazy.

As Bob ran out of his position, he saw the Trojan forward, Lippert, holding the ball, pivot out of the way of a Kansas player, and as he did so his blind side was to Bob. Bob took one chance in a hundred, dove for the ball, caught it with his hands, and before Lippert realized what had happened, Bob had stolen it from him, was dribbling toward the basket, drawing the Trojans deeper into defensive territory.

Engleman, the Kansas forward, was far out to the side of the basket, in the corner. Bob passed to him, and Engleman sent a high arching shot and the ball crashed through the basket.

The gun sounded and the game was over and Kansas won 43-42.

"Call it what you want," Phog said after the game, "but that brain wave came to me and I had to yell for Bob to start running. Nothing else could have won the game." . . .

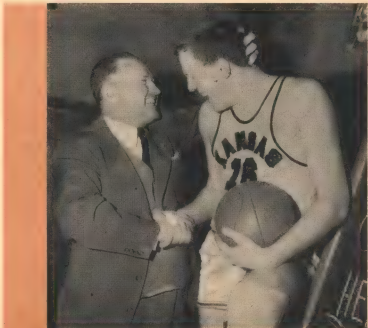
At Kansas University the brain wave they love best came to Phog in his sleep on the night of March 18, 1922, and as a mental phenomenon it should be of considerable interest to students of the occult, dreams, and mental telepathy.

Kansas was scheduled to play Missouri the next night. Missouri had won 16 games without a loss and Kansas had had a bad season. And to make defeat a certainty, Armin Wostemeyer, Phog's star forward, had been disqualified because of his studies. So Phog didn't sleep very well that night, and sometime just before five o'clock, the dream came to him.

In it Phog saw Tommy Johnson, the immortal hero of all Jayhawkers, the D'Artagnan of the Kansas gridiron, the greatest of all who have worn the Jayhawker football toga. As a redheaded youth, Tommy Johnson was frail and had a touch of tuberculosis, but he had one dream and that was to play on the Kansas football team. He lived outdoors, fought his sickness, and apparently had won by the time he entered the university.

For three years his cleated shoes made football history for Kansas. As quarterback, his 1908 and 1909 team slashed through all opposition with Tommy Johnson performing unbelievable miracles on the field. But in his last game, in 1910 against Missouri, two Missouri players knocked him down and scissored him with their legs. This opened an old tubercular lesion on his kidney and the immortal Tommy died a year later.

In the dream Phog saw a tall, lean and blond lad with Tommy. Phog recognized this youth as Tusten Acker-



Phog congratulates Clyde Lovelette, called by many basketball's greatest center, after he led the Jayhawkers to victory with 40 points to beat LaSalle 70-65 in the semi-finals of the 1952 Olympic trials in Madison Square Garden.

man, an intense and serious sophomore who had tried without success to make the basketball team.

But the next night, when Kansas lined up against Missouri, Tusten Ackerman was in the forward spot vacated by Wostenmeyer. What happened in that game is still remembered at Kansas. It was Ackerman's game. This tall and lean sophomore stole the show. He played like a strangely inspired human and almost single-handedly defeated Missouri by a score of 25-15.

And here is the weird gimmick in Phog's dream. Unknown to Phog, or to the fans, Tusten Ackerman had lived with only one passion, one hate. He had been a 6-year-old child when Tommy Johnson died, and to this little boy the death of his great hero was caused by the University of Missouri players.

At the tender age of six he swore he would avenge Tommy Johnson's death. He had dreamed of growing up to take Tommy's place on the Kansas football team, but was too frail, too light for football. So he turned to basketball, his second best chance to get back at Missouri.

And on this night he got his first taste of revenge, and it is a matter of record that during the years Tusten Ackerman played basketball at Kansas, Missouri never won a game against the Jayhawkers.

Our only comment on the story of this strange dream is Ripley's famous words, "Believe it or not."

In 1934 Phog was confronted by the problem that faces many coaches. His son Milton had entered the university and wanted to play basketball. In his book, *Better Basketball*, Phog had written some years before, "It is always difficult, if not unwise, for a father to attempt to coach his own son."

However, Phog had little to say about Milton's playing. When the freshmen reported for basketball practice, Milton was there. "Okay, Dad," Milton said, "forget I'm your son. I'm trying out for the first team."

Phog did a good job of forgetting Milton was his son. During that freshman practice one got the impression that Milton was a very undesirable stepson. Phog razed him at every mistake; did everything possible to discourage the boy from playing, but Milton only grinned and played harder.

He was too good for Phog to overlook the next year and he became the sparkplug of the Kansas team, but his road wasn't easy. All the animosity that had been built up over the years against his father was hurled at him by the rooters. "Give Junior the ball," and, "Do what papa tells you,"

would resound from the bleachers during the game.

But "Junior" became one of the great players and was picked two years straight on the All-American team.

Only once did Phog have trouble with him. In 1936 Phog had introduced a new system of offense that Milton didn't think so hot, and his playing suffered. Before the Nebraska game, which would determine the Big Six championship, Phog electrified the basketball world by announcing he had benched his son.

Milton was sent into the game the last few minutes to pull victory out of defeat. Phog never had any more trouble with him.

A few years later Bob entered the university. Phog couldn't refuse him a chance to make the team because of Milton. Bob heard the same taunts about "Junior" and "Papa's boy," but like Milton he became one of the great Kansas players and was chosen as All-American for two years.

Phog is a strict disciplinarian during the training. He himself neither smokes or drinks and woe unto any player he catches in either of these evils. Despite his age Phog will don a uniform and if his young hopefuls are not playing as he thinks they should, he will take the ball and give them some first-hand lessons.

Fundamentals are the basis of his coaching. "Games are won on the mistakes of your opponents," is one of his theories, and his men are forced to practice hour after hour pivoting, passing, dribbling, and guarding.

Phog's two years at the Kansas City Osteopathic School have proved a boon to his coaching. As a result, his boys are always in fine physical shape. Unknown to the public, Lawrence, Kansas, has long been the mecca of such basketball players and other athletes. Two years ago Mickey Mantle went there, spent a month under Phog's care, and came away with a bad shoulder completely healed. The list of other stars, such as Johnny Mize, Tommy Henrich, and Carl Hubbell, who have journeyed to Lawrence is long and impressive.

Phog's handling of the team near game time would make a good Hollywood scenario. One hour before the contest the cameras would find the Kansas team in a large room with a fireplace and a roaring fire in it. The boys are sitting with their shoes and socks off, their bare feet close to the fire, the skin almost blistered by the heat.

Cold feet are a phobia with Phog. "I never saw a man with cold feet who wasn't nervous and jumpy. Keep the feet warm and you keep the nerves of the players calm."

After this foot-warming scene, the team is loaded into taxis that have

special heating facilities to keep the feet warm, and are taken to the scene of the game.

Phog has all the known superstitions, but to him they are all in reverse. He always has to have a black cat around when the team goes on the court, and sometime during the day the team is required to walk under a ladder. On the day of the contest, the 13th chair must remain empty.

In the dressing room, just before the game, the scene depends on the psychological state of the team. Usually Phog will have the boys sit around a table, then he will snap out the lights and in the darkness he will talk slowly and quietly, telling them that the game will be tough and the rooters will be against them.

If the game doesn't look too hard, Phog may not turn out the light, but he always lays stress on the animosity of the crowd against him and Kansas.

Should the team seem listless and not up to its usual spirits, Phog puts on a real scene. He is liable to grab a chair, swing it over their heads, yell to them to get out and get out fast. This usually jars them out of the lethargy.

No matter what theatricals Phog pulls, he has the boys keyed up for that moment when he will lead them on the court to receive the boos and jeers of the angry fans.

Phog's uncanny understanding of the foibles of youth and his ability to correct them has contributed much to his success as a coach. At times he has had to resort to bizarre means to accomplish this.

In 1943 Kansas had perhaps its greatest team, but as the boys started East just before Christmas for four games, Phog was positive they wouldn't win any of them.

He had the players, some of the best, but they were a pampered lot of boys, some from wealthy families, who adjusted themselves to training on the basketball court but were unable to do the same among themselves. Such things as self-denial and unselfishness were foreign to them, and the team was split by jealousies and personal dislikes. Morale was lacking.

Phog announced the trip East would be taken in day coaches, with stopovers at night in hotels, then closed his ears to the chorus of protests.

The coaches were filled with soldiers returning from Pearl Harbor and the Far East. Many were wounded, maimed, and badly burned. They had been on the train for days, packed in like sardines, sleeping in the aisles, in the men's room, on duffle bags or anything else they could find.

Phog's spoiled boys turned their noses up to all this at first, revolted by the stench of the coach and the

crowding. But soon Phog noticed the boys sat on the arms of the seats and listened to the soldiers tell of the war, of seeing buddies burned to death in front of their eyes, of rolling on the streets and in the gutters to escape the bullets from the Jap planes that were strafing Pearl Harbor.

These college boys seemed like a page of memory to these battle-scarred veterans, who had only a year or two before been like them. They wanted to talk to these boys, tell them what it meant to be back home and how thankful they were for what life could give them from now on.

On the next day not one member of the team was in a seat as long as a man in uniform was standing. A change came over the team. The bickering and petty jealousies seemed forgotten. There was a stopover at Ann Arbor, Michigan, and it took five days to get to Buffalo, New York, where Kansas was to meet St. Bonaventure, a Catholic college.

The team that walked off that train was far different than the boys that had left Lawrence, Kansas, five days before. They were quiet, a little humble, and there was no grouching or kicking.

THAT night they defeated a first-class Bonaventure team 53-22. The most dazed individual on that court was Phog himself. "I couldn't believe my eyes. No Kansas team ever played with such brilliance. I knew the boys were good if they really played, but I never dreamed they were that good."

Father Donnelly, athletic director for St. Bonaventure, knew Phog and the problem he had faced with the team when it left Lawrence. He said, "Dr. Allen, you have truly wrought a miracle."

The miracle continued, and these boys, who had undergone almost a reincarnation during those five days on the stuffy and crowded day coaches, whipped a fast Fordham team in Madison Square Garden, and then went on to Philadelphia where their feat caused every sports writer in the East to look for new adjectives to describe their playing.

In the Quaker City they met what was considered the greatest ball team in the country—St. Joseph's College and the great Senesky. Nobody gave Kansas a chance in this game. St. Joseph's had never been defeated with Senesky in the line-up, but when the game was over the scoreboard registered Kansas 63, St. Joseph 38.

Even Phog was speechless in the face of this miracle, and he never once, on that trip, opened his mouth to reporters.

On the way home, the team stopped off at St. Louis and won from St.

Louis University 60-25. They went on to sweep through the season without losing a game, to give Phog his fourth undefeated team and another championship.

"In my half century working with college boys," Phog said, "I have found the great majority of them instinctively are good, but sometimes it takes drastic means to bring out these qualities. That trip in those day coaches crowded with wounded soldiers was too much for even the most pampered member of the team. The result was wonderful, not as much from the games-won standpoint, as for what it did for those boys."

The last game of that season was against Kansas State on March 25th. After it was all over Phog Allen, driving the station wagon, and Mrs. Allen the family car, took nine members of that team to Leavenworth where they were inducted into the service.

"And they all made wonderful soldiers," Phog added.

This statement about goodness in boys must be qualified in Phog's case. He is a typical Mid-Western provincial, convinced New York City and the East Coast is the Sodom and Gomorrah of the country, inhabited by greasy-faced foreigners who are all gangsters and killers. To him those sterling qualities of character are only found in the young of the great Middle West.

This narrow provincialism explains much of his animosity, both toward the Eastern teams and the way they play the game. He expressed his feeling when the basketball scandals broke out several years ago. "He was quoted by a Kansas City *Star* reporter as saying, 'What do you expect among those foreigners? Out here we have real American youth, boys with character who wouldn't dream of doing anything like that.'"

He probably stopped reading the newspapers about that time and didn't learn that the scandal spread to the West.

Phog's running battle with the rules committee stems largely from his early training with Dr. Naismith, and Phog has had some measure of success. Twenty years ago the dribble was abolished. Phog got in touch with as many coaches as possible, met them in Des Moines, Iowa, and let loose with an attack on this change of the rules that landed the dribble back in the game.

He is credited also with getting the Olympic committee in 1936 to include basketball on its agenda. In 1949 he was responsible for the two-minute foul rule, and in the same year he got the center court division that stopped stalling with the ball.

Phog's 1951 one-man rebellion against the rules about fouling in

which he announced he would refuse all free throws in case of fouls, wasn't a great success. At the end of the season he claimed this had profited the Kansas team, but no other coach felt inclined to go along with the rebellion and in 1952 Phog gave up the fight.

Phog hasn't been without honors. He was the first president of the National Association of Basketball Coaches and in 1950 was picked as "The Man of the Year in Basketball." In 1951 during a game with the Oklahoma Aggies, the game was delayed while Henry P. Iba, the Aggies' coach, presented Phog with a plaque which was dedicated to F. C. Allen, a great coach, fighting rival, and true sportsman.

Last year Phog's Press defense wasn't the only surprise he pulled on opposing teams. The second one was in the form of a 6-10 center named Bert Howard Born, nicknamed A. Born, who took the great Lovelette's place.

This tall and lanky center was slow in getting started last year, but when Phog introduced his new Press defense, he was in his glory. Against Colorado in mid-season, he scored 44 points, establishing the Big Seven scoring record for a single game and tying Lovelette's record against St. Louis the year before.

In this Colorado game Born fell and broke his finger, but he played the remainder of the season with an aluminum guard. Handicapped this way, he won the coaches' acclaim for his playing in the N.C.A.A. tournament and was chosen as the tournament's most valuable player.

With Born to spark the 1954 team, pre-season experts give Phog an even chance to cop the N.C.A.A. title. Phog isn't so sure, but he never is optimistic about his prospects. In his office in Lawrence, Kansas, he said, "We'll continue to try to break at every opportunity but we may have to go to a pattern because of a lack of floor speed. We should have good shooting, average ball handling, good play at the pivot. In the Big Seven I think Kansas State has the edge on us."

His caution doesn't fool other coaches. They remember what he threw at them at mid-season last year, and as yet they haven't formulated any defense against it. But even if they did, they wouldn't know what this wily old coach will flash next.

One thing is certain. Phog will have the fans booing him and his team and his boys will play like demons because of it. Then there are his "brain waves." One is liable to come any minute, and by now rival coaches fear these as much as the new tricks Phog figures up. •



A Psychiatrist named PETE

*Pete had to humor the old boy
to talk him out of his obsession
for sunken treasure,
but what about his beautiful daughter?
Psychiatry was no good with her.*

By R. W. KREPPS and H. L. GOLD

"Diving," roared Todd, and I felt the room go as taut as a balloon on the verge of explosion. His wife's brandy inhaler rang bell-like on her front teeth, while Diana, superficially as calm as a stuffed cat, took the cigarette from her holder and ground it out so forcefully that the paper split.

"Diving," I said. "Well, well. Unusual occupation. Do you really think it would be as satisfying as all that?"

"Do I?" Todd trumpeted, leaping to his feet. "A life on the ocean wave! The free salt wind in your hair! A good stout ship rolling under your feet!" He rocked to and fro to illus-

trate the ship's motion, his fat cheeks glowing pink as if buffeted by an angry gale. "The green water closes over your head; unnamed fish nose at the helmet plate. There lie the gaunt tilted ribs of a wreck, dead, silent, mysterious. And then, brass-bound chests, rotten with age, spilling golden doubloons on the untrod ocean floor!"

I almost forgot that I was here in a *sub rosa* professional capacity to study Cyril Todd, and I got a little excited. "It sounds like Stevenson," I said.

Diana uncrossed her legs, those lithe magnificent limbs in black velvet pants which had been drawing my eye for a quarter of an hour. "It probably is," she drawled. "Puffball has more books on the sea, more catalogues of diving equipment than the owner of a salvage fleet."

"Puffball?"

"Pop," she said, with a sort of lazy impatience. "The plump gent doing the monologue."

"Oh," I said. I scribbled a few mental notes. Subject, Cyril Todd. Age, fifty-one. Occupation, successful banker. Height, five six, weight, one eighty. Symptoms: after a lifetime of staidly and methodically accumulating money, has suddenly chartered a ship and announced his intention of diving for sunken treasure; now claims to be free of worry for the first time since boyhood. Physical indications: eyes and hands unduly steady, unwarranted absence of strain, excessively relaxed. Reiterated thesis, that practically nobody does what he really wants to do, and that by godfrey, he, Cyril Todd, has come to his senses.

All this, Mrs. Todd had told me over the phone that morning, was the result of an accident he'd had about a month before. One of his cars had wrapped itself around a tree, and Cyril had climbed out with the shaken nervous system and a recognition of the fact that he could be snuffed out in the space of a twitch. So now he was a potential deep-sea diver.

Obviously, happy as he was with this new-found career, his family couldn't get him to a psychiatrist; so I'd agreed to a mild deception for a preliminary analysis of the problem, though I let it be known that I didn't generally approve of subterfuge. I'd been introduced as one of Diana's boy friends, of whom there appeared to be enough to fill up the rolls of a regiment.

Todd came to a pause which I imagine was meant to indicate a semi-colon, and I jumped in. "Diving is a childhood ambition, in the same class as being a fireman or a cowboy. Few men cling to such a whim."

He looked down his blob nose at me. "You're a presumptuous cub, Mr. Novaky," he said in a modified

roar. "You look like a football player, but you talk like a psychiatrist." I winced. "Diving is a man's game, and brings enormous rewards. My equipment's bought, my vessel signed. Saturday I set sail for warm waters... and the loot of the treacherous deep."

Diana emitted a loud groan. "Blackbeard rides again! Let's get out of here before all these golden sands smother us."

I made my farewells and followed her from the library. In the hall she turned to me, her piquant perfume widening my nostrils. "Mr. Novaky, I—"

"Call me Doctor," I urged; without my title I felt as naked as a Phi Beta Kappa man who's mislaid his key.

"Doctor," said Diana. Her tone made me dislike the word, and here I'd spent most of my life acquiring the right to wear it. "Don't you have a first name?" she asked.

"Pete."

"Pete. You look like a Pete." She inspected my six feet one with what seemed to be grudging approval. Then, in a lowered voice of such thrilling caliber that I shuddered, "What about it? Is Puffball off his rocker?"

"Your father," I said carefully, "has apparently reached the end of his psychic tether. He is seizing on boyhood dreams to escape present conflict."

"Poor Pop, I guess he has had his share of plagues and boils. A house full of women and work, work, all his life. Do you think you can snap him out of it?"

It dawned on me that under her gorgeous, flip exterior, Diana had a heart that was warm and kindly. "Psychiatry is not magic, Miss Todd. We don't guarantee cures. This won't be a simple case, but I'll do my best. And my fee is twenty-five dollars an hour." The butler helped me into my coat, and I flipped my scarf over a piece of torn sleeve lining.

"We'll give you a try, anyway," said Diana. "Get him into your office somehow. Talk him out of this puerile expedition. He may have a skull full of damp noodles, but he's my father and I'd hate to have him wind up as a snack for a shark." She opened the door. "So long, witch doctor."

I wasn't sure about her father, but I knew that I, Dr. Peter Novaky, definitely had a skull full of damp noodles; because the next morning I was still thinking about her. As I shaved, I remembered her large and incomparable brown eyes, so obviously the sort of eyes Mother Nature had had in mind all the time. I dwelt on

her glorious black hair, her superbly-constructed torso, even her slim, aristocratic feet.

As I walked to my office, I brooded on the twenty-five bucks that, if Cyril would consent to see me for an hour a week, would bring my seven-day income to \$125.00—not bad for a psychiatrist in a small city, but remarkably minute when compared with Diana's dough.

Resolutely guiding my thoughts into a more productive channel, I began to think about Todd's problem. To help him, and incidentally to collect my fee, I had to lure him to the office. In this quiet room, with the venetian blinds closed against the world, he would reveal the roots of his maladjustment. How to get him here?

"There's only one way," I said, and got up and walked to the door and opened it just in time to admit Cyril himself.

I REELED back. This wasn't quite the way I'd had in mind. Momentarily I wondered if I was a witch doctor. I had evidently conjured up the pudgy banker merely by wishing for him.

"Morning," he said, rolling in on his short plump legs. He leaned forward with an expression of intimate, pudgy benevolence. "I'm here to help you, my boy. I want you to tell me all. Try not to hold back a thing."

"Eh?"

"You loathe being cooped up here, don't you?" he went on, his voice chiming with sympathy. "You feel you ought to be out having adventures, using those magnificent muscles. Played college football, didn't you?"

"Well, yes, but—"

"Swimming team?"

"And track. How—"

"You hate it, sitting here day in and day out, while the broad sunny veld beckons you, the jungle utters its siren call, the deep blue sea murmurs in your mind's ear. Right?"

"Yes," I said. "I mean no."

"You never wanted to be a psychiatrist."

His voice, capable of shattering goblets in ordinary conversation, was now soft, compelling, a positive lullaby to the psyche. I said, "It wasn't my favorite subject."

"Did your mother or father decide on it for you?"

"Father was a specialist in Hungary, so naturally—"

"Naturally, horse feathers!" he boomed in archaic idiom. "Nobody can determine your life for you. Unfetter these shackles! Do what you want before it's too late!"

"See here, I don't—"

"My expedition can use a strong lad like you; we've got no ship's doc-

tor. A hundred a week and ten per cent of the treasure. Yes or no?" "I need time," I said, sparring for time.

"Think it over carefully and call me at the bank in an hour." He writhed back into his overcoat. "We leave Saturday."

I sat there a while, watching the tremor of my hands go from fine to coarse. Then I called the Todd mansion.

Diana said hello, and I caught myself shuddering again. Gripping my unprofessional emotions and sitting on them, I said, "Miss Todd, your father has just left my office."

"Wonderful!" she sang. "How on earth did you do it?"

"That isn't important," I said evasively. "The upshot is, he wants me to go along."

"On the voyage? My God! I thought you were going to talk him out of it. Why didn't you?"

I used the device of replying with questions. "Would that be advisable? Might not lack of fulfillment create additional tension?"

"I don't know. Would it?" "I saw no way out of a direct answer. "Very possibly."

"Well, what do you suggest?" Her tone implied that, whatever it was, it couldn't be much good.

"I think I ought to go, to watch for danger signs and act promptly in emergencies."

"At twenty-five dollars an hour?" she yipped.

"At a hundred a week," I said frostily. "A fellow human is in difficulty; it's my duty to help him." Resolutely I steered shy of the uneasy feeling that Diana was a factor in my decision.

"I suppose you're right," she said pensively. "We can't force Puffball out of this looniness, we've got to ooze him out gradually. Okay, Pete. Come along."

"Come?" I repeated. "Are you sailing too?"

"I certainly am. So's Mother. I've just decided. The whole caboodle's going on this treasure hunt."

I pictured Cyril's face when he heard about the additions to his crew, felt my hands go clammy, and hung up. For the first time I was glad that popular notions in this small town had forced me to buy a couch. I went and lay down on it.

If Cyril Todd was bitter about the women—and he was, blaming their presence on me with many a lusty bellow of wrath—Captain Sparling, an aged malcontent with wind-watered eyes, was even worse. "Ships and women don't mix," he said gloomily. "Any dumb fool knows females hate each other. Vessel'd sooner founder than carry one."

"How about liners?" I said, watching the shore recede.

"Call them ships?" He spat over the lee rail. "Ha! Hotels on hulls." "No real salt would sail on 'em," agreed Cyril.

As we left the winter behind, and Diana changed from sheared beaver to strapless silks, then to sun suits designed to wrap a man's windpipe around his soft palate, I fought my infatuation tooth and nail. I tried to retain the blighted eye of a scientist who knows women better inside than out.

I'd been conditioned to bachelorhood for years by the neurotic women I'd met. Suppose I married one of them? Life would be a continual battle against repressions, hostilities, guilt complexes and the three-year-old subconscious. On the other hand, if I should wed the rare clinical norm, life would be about as stimulating as a three-days-dead cigar butt.

I considered Diana. Physically, she was normal, in the finest sense of the word. Her short black hair glistened with sebaceous health. Her wide brown eyes, fringed with long and irrelevant lashes, were neither pale at the lid nor veined across the clear whites. Her properly nourished skin, tanned by now to rich soft gold, showed no sign of poor pigmentation or neurodermatitis; and it was stretched at precisely the right tautness over flesh and fat of obviously superior quality.

Mentally, she deviated from the balanced norm, but in an entirely delightful way. And even if she hadn't, I was hooked, as Cyril said, from the word go.

I spat moodily, and discovered why Captain Sparling always choose the lee rail. Then Diana came up and put her bare arms on the wood next to mine.

"Maybe Puffball wasn't so wrong after all," she said pensively, exercising her woman's right to start a conversation in the middle.

"About what?"

"Adventure. It puts champagne bubbles in your blood stream."

I nodded. Chill spray and hot sun were flicking my face, and the thought of a stuffy office was unbearable. I said so.

"That's right," she declared, "you aren't built for a desk job, Pete. I don't care how keen your mind is. You ought to be a big-game hunter, or a movie cowboy specializing in fights down at the O.K. Corral. You look like Gregory Peck, only twice as wide." She laughed. There was enough of Cyril's timbre in her voice to make the merriment full and mellow, so that my heart gave a sad little leap. "That's half a joke," she went on, "but really, don't you ache to use

those huge hands for something more strenuous than shoving a pencil and adjusting the angle of a couch?"

I looked her square in the eye. "I do."

Unaccountably, she avoided my gaze. "Ever think of getting hitched, Pete?" she asked quietly. It was so unlike her usual tone that it put me on guard.

"Occasionally."

"Just what sort of girl would you want?"

Forebearing to shout "You!" I rubbed my jaw and thought a minute. It was obvious that Diana was growing interested in me—shipboard confinement, no other eligible males, and all that. I had to squelch her fast. I had two hundred in the bank, and her family was so rich that money ran out of their ears.

"I want a woman," I said at last, "who'll let me alone, who'll have her own interests and not demand that I provide ego maximization. A wife, in short, who won't insist on being lover, pal, and colleague."

"I see." She turned, dignified and remote. "I hope you find her, Dr. Novaky. You deserve to." She stalked off.

Cyril, smoking by the deckhouse, chuckled acidly. "Mail back your books, son," he said. "If that's what's in 'em, you were swindled."

SHORTLY thereafter, the captain burst on deck, waving charts and yodking that we were approaching the sunken treasure ship. "Right near by," he said dogmatically. "She was the *Platonic*, carryin' bullion from Capetown to Newport News. Went down in the worst hurricane I seen in forty years o' foul weather. Last thing I did was shoot our position before I went over the side. Got it down to seconds of latitude and longitude. Right about here!"

Todd, who had turned on his supersonic detector and was listening at the earphones, every fat muscle tense, said, "Even if you're off, this'll locate the wreck."

"Off?" Captain Sparling bit down peevishly on a pipe that would have felled a gorilla with one puff. "Me off? I'll give that gadget twenty minutes' start and beat it against a head wind. Only thing bothers me is when our doom is gonna strike." He scowled horribly at Diana and her mother, patently dreaming of planks, keel-haulings, and the cat.

I lounged on the rail watching the sweaty race between the skipper's intuition and the banker's machine. As usual, I was feeling low in mind. When Todd squalled, "Couple points to port—there she lies! the gold!" I couldn't even smile. "Gold, schmold," I grunted. How long would my ten

per cent keep Diana in her accustomed splendor?

They hove to and made an underwater survey. "She's there all right," Sparling admitted, "lying in twelve fathom; shelf a hundred yards away drops off to forty fathom; floor current three knots; shale and sand bed. Lucky the bottom's not farther down, but then we're pretty near shore. Prob'ly won't even need the decompression tank."

"Great," said Cyril, clad now in thick gray sweater and heavy pants. "Break out the rig. I'm going down."

Until that instant his women must have had themselves convinced that he wouldn't really do it.

"Cyril!" cried Mrs. Todd. "Puff-ball! Not you?" said Diana.

"Who else?" He smirked plumply at them. "Pete's certified me sound as a nut."

DIANA made an inspection of me that withered my toes. "How much did he pay you to say that?" she asked, in a voice which would have etched glass. "You are a prime stinker."

"He only looks unhealthy. Outside of arches that may not stand the weight of lead boots, I give you my word he's in perfect fettle."

"Leaping lizards!" exclaimed Todd in the parlance of his distant youth. "Suffering sunfish! A lifetime's dream coming true!" He clambered grotesquely over the side. Even in the bulky diving suit he looked like a billiard ball with legs. "Don't forget to write!" he shouted gaily, as the helmet was lowered over his head.

Then he went heavily down the ladder, his face behind its glass plate

grinning only a trifle nervously. Bending over the rail next to a silent Diana, I found that my own heart was pumping madly. Cyril Todd was in better shape, I reflected, than I was. The water swirled over the helmet, which descended out of sight, leaving only a wake of bubbles popping ominously.

Diana glanced at me. Her expression was that of a good woman betrayed.

After a period that might have been short or interminable, depending on who was judging it, the telephone man gave a gasp of horror.

"An octopus—he can't move!"

For the fraction of a moment the deck was held in a terrible hush; then someone shouted, "The other suit, quick! I'll go down!" What a brave man, I thought. Who could assert that civilization was poor training for a primeval predicament? Then Diana's arms were around my neck and she was hugging me tightly, her eyes wet. Only then did I realize that I had been the rash volunteer.

"Possibly a member of the crew, more experienced than I—"

"We're all needed here," said Captain Sparling, respectfully touching his cap to the bold landsman. "Go on, lad, grab the glory."

The diving suit had been designed for a smaller occupant; they practically had to wedge me into it with shoe-horns. I took a last fond look at Diana's wonderful face, and then the waters lapped up the clumsy suit and joined above my helmet. I was lost in a dark and murderous world. Remembering the octopus down below, I quivered feebly. Maybe it had al-

ready disposed of its first victim and awaited the next.

The ocean grew blacker, and the pressure became a burden on me. Bubbles, chugging out of the helmet valve, went gurgling toward the surface. Fish glided by with stiff necks, like girls ignoring wolf-calls. Weird creatures swirled in my direction. Great dark shapeless shapes in the middle distance made my heart flip over limply. I brooded on savage barricade, giant clams, the octopus. The state of my nervous system was deplorable.

I HAD managed to keep parallel with Todd's air lines. Now the telephone squeaked, "See him yet?"

I tilted my massive head-piece to squint down into the perilous night of the sea. There was a vague blot which could only be the fat little banker, and around it was a waving knot of tentacles. My pulse halted for a long, terrible moment. "I see him."

Suddenly I was dropping like an express elevator. I howled, and was braked with such force that I thought my feet would go through their leaden soles. "Tell him to ha-ha-hang on," I chattered.

And then, as I moved sluggishly a few steps through the glue-thick depths, advancing under the lee of the *Platonic's* dark hull, my fears dwindled and died, and in their place grew something that I suppose could be called courage, or perhaps, more accurately, fatalism. I didn't recognize it then; I simply knew that I wasn't shaking any more. Like primitive man in danger, I wasted no time in conscious thought, but acted purely reflexively.

Blundering awkwardly against him, I took a firm grip on my employer and hacked out with my knife at the mass of tentacles. One after another was sliced through and fell away. A feeler-like loop coiled evilly over my own head and I divided it with what I considered a rather neatly executed upswing-bojo-slash. In a couple of seconds Todd was free, and I bawled into the telephone to be drawn up fast, for his suit was already deflating, evidently gashed by the horny beak of an octopus, and the body inside felt lax and boneless.

I was still clutching him about the waist when we were hauled aboard; apparently my subconscious didn't trust anybody after the battle on the bottom, for Sparling had to pry my arm off Cyril by main force. With the helmet removed, and uncompressed air flowing generously into my lungs, I came back to normal in a hurry.

Mrs. Todd was clucking over her badly shaken husband. "Was it ghast-



ly, darling? Was the octopus very big?"

"Tremendous," said he. "It attacked me from behind. I thought I was a goner. Good old Pete!"

"Good old Pete," echoed my beloved, the delectable glow of perturbation still dying her cheeks. "How I wronged you."

Curtly I beckoned to the banker, ignoring Diana. I was living for the moment in a strictly male world. "I want to treat you for shock. Come downstairs."

"Below," he corrected absently, but he came.

I led him to a bunk, poured him a stiff hooker of rum, and sat down opposite him. "Okay," I said, "let's face facts, Cyril. When you realized that you were actually under the waves, rather than imagining it, you were scared silly. You thought of the voracious monsters, so thrilling to read about, that were now a real threat to your life. You turned into a shimmery mass of jello. Then long black tentacles were wrapping around you. You couldn't pull free. You lost your head."

"For the love of mud, you don't have to tell me," said Todd. "I was there."

"So you screamed that it was an octopus."

"That's my guess. I'm not up on marine life. Maybe it was a squid." "I'm afraid," I said gently, "that you got tangled up in your own air hoses and signal lines."

He studied his hands and said nothing. "Nobody has to know," I told him.

He looked up quickly. "You wouldn't tell 'em, Pete?"

"That depends."

"Ah," he said bitterly, "to every man his price?"

"More or less. But I think you'll agree to mine with a whoop of glee." And then we had a short, pithy, interesting discussion of business.

PRESENTLY, the pair of us were stretched out in deck chairs, and the women were staring at us. Diana looked extremely teed off. It still rankled, my ignoring her after the octopus episode. Like all of her sex, she couldn't understand that there are times when women briefly cease to exist, even for the men who love them best; times, for instance, of overwhelming anger, excitement, or decision. Mine had been a time of decision.

"Well," said Mrs. Todd, "you don't look especially shocked to me. You look smug."

"He's had enough expedition," Diana hazarded, "and we're heading for home. He'll read adventure books for the rest of his life, and tell the

story of that octopus so often that we'll think it's carved into the bone of our skulls. I know Puffball. He's through with treasure hunting."

"That would be an emotional and unrealistic attitude," I said, putting my fingertips together automatically. "There's no reason to abandon the bullion."

"No?" she snapped.

"Certainly not. Other men can go down to the sea in waterproof suits."

"None of the crew will," she said triumphantly. "They're afraid the octopus had a mate."

"I will salvage the treasure," I said with quiet pride.

"You? You're a psychiatrist."

"I was a psychiatrist. I'm now a deep-sea diver." I stood up before her, feeling as tall and wide as two Gregory Pecks. "Cyril was right, I'm a born adventurer. That was impressed on me twelve fathoms down."

I took her slim waist between my hands—the rugged paws, I now recognized, of a true swashbuckler—and yanked her to me. "Diana, my love, will you marry me?"

She gazed up at me with radiantly innocent eyes, and she said, "I arranged it with Captain Sparling a few minutes ago. He's going to splice us this afternoon."

"But you didn't know then that I was going to be wallowing in bullion," I objected. "I was only a poverty-stricken doctor."

"So? Do you think I eat shredded greenbacks for breakfast? You big lout, I'd be happy with you in a sod shanty. There's only one thing you've got to understand, though, Pete. I'm going to be lover, pal, and colleague. I'm brimming with emotional excesses."

"So am I, sweetheart," I said, squeezing her hard. "Now listen, and forget the sod shanty. Cyril and I have formed a salvage company, with me as principal diver, his investment in ship and equipment to be repaid out of earnings. We'll strip the hulk, sail home with our booty, divide it equally and look around for the next plum."

MRS. TODD said ferociously, "Why not take over his bank too, while he's still in shock?"

"Shock, ha. He simply knows a good thing when he hears it." I bent down to Diana and gave her a kiss fit to rank, I must say, with the great first kisses of history. Eventually I came up for air, and saw Cyril Todd's fat face beaming over her shoulder. I winked at him.



Midge McCall, Indian Fighter



By JAMES CHARLES LYNCH—Ten thousand or twenty-five thousand redskins, it didn't matter to Midge, as long as one person was around who kept his head.

This was Indian country and dangerous, and Hollis McCall, his wagon leading the westering emigrant train, plodded beside his ox teams. John Thomas rode a half mile ahead of the McCall wagon, scouting the way, and Hollis carefully watched the young man so as not to lose him in the flickering heat haze that had hemmed them in now for thirty consecutive days. Mrs. McCall rode the wagon seat and carefully watched their eighteen-year-old daughter, Midge, lest she fall off her high perch onto her pretty head out of sheer, bubbling frustration. With John Thomas in sight, Midge was always oblivious to anything else.

"He is a dunce and a blockhead," Midge suddenly declared. "I absolutely loathe him. I'm speaking of John Thomas, of course."



"Of course, dear," Mrs. McCall murmured, patiently. "And I think it is a good thing, too. If you liked him, it would be difficult for you when he leaves us, tomorrow, to turn north for that place of his in Oregon."

Midge had enormous brown eyes and thick, rioting hair, both black and dark copper red at the same time. She was tiny, but exquisitely formed and always seemed to be breathlessly straining at life, as if her body was far too petite to cope with the enormous thoughts that raced through her mind. She did everything with a rush, counted by hundreds instead of ones, and even sang hymns ferociously when the Reverend Carter held services. And she was very positive she could make John Thomas fiercely happy, if the man would just use the brains God gave him.

"Don't ever count on him turning north for that place of his in Oregon," Midge stated, positively. "He'll never go to any place but California as long as that blonde widow, Vixen Biddle, is going to San Francisco."

"If John Thomas wants to follow Vixen Biddle to California, that's his business," declared Mrs. McCall. "What you want to do, dear, is realize that John Thomas is not the only man in the world."

"But I do realize that, Mama, and wouldn't you think Vixen Biddle was old enough to have as much sense? Just because she is young, and has a beautiful face and figure, and Mr. Biddle went to California and found her a gold mine before he died, so she could travel with two wagons and a woman to fix her hair all the way to San Francisco, so she can look after all that property she says her poor first husband bought with part of his gold, is no reason she would make John Thomas a better wife than I could, but who cares about him? I've scarcely noticed the man in weeks. Look! He's gone! Mama, John's disappeared!"

"Now stop being silly," advised Mrs. McCall. "He probably rode into those trees up there. Maybe that's Beaver Creek he's been telling us about."

"You're right, Mama!" Midge agreed, breathlessly. "There he comes now. Isn't he brave, riding into those trees all alone? He could have been ambushed by savages, you know. Papa! Look! John Thomas is riding back toward us."

"I see him," Hollis McCall said, dryly. "I got eyes."

"But he's waving his arm, Papa. He's waving it in a circle and that means to circle the wagons. Hurry, Papa. Maybe there are twenty-five thousand Indians coming."

Mr. McCall spit. "If there are,

John wouldn't be sitting his horse so lazy where he's sitting it, which is where he wants me to start the circle." Drawing a long breath, Hollis looked up at his wife and said in a pained tone, "Sara, speak to that girl, will you? The last river we crossed was a hundred miles wide and now it's twenty-five thousand Indians. How much do you think a man can stand?"

Midge looked pityingly down at her father, and then started to strain forward as if to help the lumbering wagon along toward the spot where John Thomas lounged in the saddle, relaxed, but keeping his roving gray eyes on the heat-shortened horizon. And while the wagon slowly ate up the distance, Midge poked at her unruly hair and pinched her cheeks to make them glow.

"We must be sure and make ourselves look pretty for those twenty-five thousand Indians, mustn't we?" said Mrs. McCall.

Midge gasped and her cheeks flamed of their own accord. "If I were doing anything as silly as that, I guess I didn't know it. Actually, I was thinking up strategy, in case the Indians do attack. And if they do, I'm not going to crawl in any old wagon and lie low, like John Thomas says. I'm going to fight, just like Papa. In fact it will probably be me who will capture their chief by running out and snatching him right off his horse. Papa will probably have to scalp him, though. I've never learned to scalp, yet."

Mrs. McCall choked, and John Thomas, to Midge's way of thinking, continued to display all the characteristics of a prime simpleton. Instead of waiting right where he was, so she could get a good look at him and curtsy so he would have to tip his hat and show her his curly, tawny hair, he simply pointed at the ground and then moved off fifty yards, so as not to interfere with the circling maneuver and yet be in a position where he could watch and give orders.

"You, Brady!" he shouted. "Close up! Close up, Walden! Come on, Rouillard, come on! I'll give a hand with the Biddle wagons."

When the thing was done, the men helped their women down, and all of them, even Midge, stood there a silent moment in the baking heat of afternoon, their spirits momentarily let down, their doubts and homesickness and worries showing. This was as good a camp as any; the willow border of Beaver Creek lay barely a hundred yards away, but after traveling so many monotonous days over flat monotonous land, hemmed in by heat and haze, it was beginning to seem as if there was no West—nothing but an

endless waste over which one traveled eternally, surrounded by dangers no one could see. Then the revelation came.

A sudden puff of wind sent a whirling dust devil skittering erratically around the wagon enclosure. Canvas tarps flapped and popped, and some of the women screamed, embarrassed, as their full skirts billowed. Then, as fast as the dust devil subsided, the temperature dropped ten degrees, the heat waves vanished, and a range of mountains, cool and inviting, lifted boldly in the west, beckoning them on. And, better than anything, there was no danger to be seen for at least a hundred miles.

The Reverend Carter, standing bareheaded in the center of the circled wagons, raised a long arm and pointed westward like a prophet, then started to gallop clear of the restraining vehicles for a better look toward the promised land, and every one stamped after him.

Midge, waiting now with an impatient stamping foot for a certain young man to show himself so she could properly display her loathing, was too engrossed to notice the exodus, at first. When she did, she picked up her skirts and started to follow, only to realize her father had run off and left his rifle leaning against the wagon-side. That made her think of something else.

"Wait!" she shrieked. "Somebody ought to guard. While you're looking west, ten thousand Indians could sneak up from the east."

No one seemed to care, so, with a last frantic look at the mountains, which she guessed were eighty thousand feet tall, Midge grabbed her father's rifle and sped to the opposite side of the circled wagons and resolutely guarded the eastern approaches until somebody finally said, "Boo!" right in her ear.

After jumping out of her skin and back in again so fast John Thomas did not even seem to notice it, Midge whirled to face him. "It's a darned good thing you're not an old Indian," she hissed at him.

John placed his broad, straight back against a wagonside, folded his arms and smiled at her, dreamily.

"And why not?" John wanted to know. "What would you have done if I had been an Indian?"

Midge grounded the butt of the heavy rifle so deliberately close to John's moccasined left foot he jumped and she assured him that, "If ever an ugly old Indian yells, 'Boo!' in my ear, I'll certainly tend to him. Not that you're not ugly enough to do with. What do you mean, sneaking up like that? You almost scared me."

"You almost scared me, too," John

Illustration by HOWARD WILLIAMSON

Thomas told her. "I counted noses when everybody was standing there gawking at the mountains, and it wasn't until I fell to chinning with Vixen Biddle that I noticed you weren't there, so I came to find you. What are you hiding here for? You scared of mountains?"

"Scared?" gasped Midge. "Are you daft? I was guarding this side against the Indians, seeing as how the rest of the crazy people were all looking the other way."

JOHN'S lips twitched, but he managed to speak, solemnly. "I see. And just what would you have done if a savage horde had attacked from this side?"

"I would probably have lost my life protecting some folks who certainly act like they need it," Midge told him. "Of course I would have killed several hundred redskins first."

"With one shot?" John managed, before his restraint caved in. "Without even a powder horn and bullet pouch? Ho-ho-ho!"

"You . . . you . . .!" shrieked Midge. "I'll show you! I just wish some Indians would attack, too, so I could." With that, and a final glare and a swish of her skirts, she left John Thomas helpless with mirth and stomped back to her father's wagon.

Her father glowered at her when she placed his rifle back against the side of the wagon. "And just what were you doing with that, young woman?" he wanted to know.

"All I can say," Midge declared, "is that, if I were a man, I would shoot an unmentionable person right through his head with it, only I didn't think there ever was a bullet heavy enough to go through his head."

"Well," said Mrs. McCall, "now that you have that out of your system, maybe you can simmer down and help me with supper."

"You can also simmer down about John Thomas," ordered Mr. McCall. "Seeing as how we were the lead wagon, today, it's his turn to sup with us, this evening, and I don't want any nonsense. Thank the Lord he'll be on his own way, tomorrow, and we can have some peace around here."

After lifting down the chest the women used for a work table, and the grub box, Hollis McCall stalked away to gather firewood, and Midge took her frustration out on the pots and pans, rattling them furiously. Later she tried to slice side meat with a big sharp knife and watch John Thomas at the same time, while he leaned against a wagon and talked to Vixen Biddle.

"Give me that knife before you cut your arm off," ordered her mother, genuinely alarmed. And then, "For land's sake, what's that?"

"It sounds like a horde of howling savages," said Midge, continuing to hack ferociously away at the meat. "And I, for one, wish it were, too. I'd show that . . . now what in the world do you suppose is the matter with Mr. Rouillard?"

On the echoes of a gun shot, Mr. Rouillard came leaping into the wagon circle, his mouth hanging open an unbelievably long time before any sound came out. "Injuns!" he finally shouted. "Injuns coming! Man, they sprouted right out of the ground!"

Every one knew what to do, but, with almost a hundred howling red warriors charging down upon them, every one forgot. They milled, confused, and yelled contradictory orders back and forth until John Thomas began to lay his hands on the men and shove them down under the wagons to fight from behind the protection of the heavy-spoked wheels. But the women all failed to heed his pleas to crawl into the wagons, preferring to stay with their men folks, instead.

A hundred yards from the train, the charging Indians wheeled off into a single file and started to race around the circle of wagons, some of them lying so far over on their running ponies they presented no target at all.

Midge reacted as if she had done this thing a hundred times. Obtaining the help of two distraught women by the sheer energy of her chattering, she dragged chests and boxes and rolled loose barrels into a tight little barricade in the middle of the enclosure. Then, one by one, she corralled the panicked little children, tossed them into her little fort and climbed in with them.

Feathered arrows hummed overhead and an occasional lead ball screamed past, and Midge had her hands full. Keeping a dozen bobbing heads down, she found, presented much the same problem as holding water in a sieve. Lying there, holding the struggling children near her, so that it looked for all the world as if she were trying to protect herself, she looked up and saw John Thomas, rifle in hand, grinning down at her.

John yelled something, and then ran on, and Midge, sputtering mad, reared up and looked over the barricade in time to see him take a stance beside the beautiful Vixen Biddle. Standing in the open space, between two of her wagons, Mrs. Biddle, smiling sweetly at John Thomas, fired a rifle at the howling savages.

For the first time, Midge wished the Indians just a little luck. She wished some wrinkled old chief would dash in and abduct Mrs. Biddle, and carry her off to make her his squaw. And she wished the Indians would make at least one dash through the train so she could die saving the children and

thus never have to face John Thomas again.

As suddenly as they had launched the attack, the Indians went whooping off across the prairie, and if any of them had been killed they certainly rode their wiry prairie ponies exceedingly well for dead men.

THERE was still an hour of daylight left when John Thomas called the people together. "Those were young Bannocks," he told them. "Growing boys, mostly, probably just a hunting party and they wanted something to brag about when they got home to their lodges. I'll follow their trail a spell just to make sure they keep going. You keep a good guard until I get back."

"That we'll do, John," Hollis McCall promised. "And we'll wait supper for you, too."

"That really won't be necessary," said Vixen Biddle, sweetly, "unless you're really set on it, that is. But I thought with a growing child, like Midge, you might want to eat earlier." John did not seem to have heard Mrs. Biddle, but his eyes danced when he looked at Midge. "Those young bucks don't know how lucky they were," he said. "They could have all been killed if our fiercest fighter hadn't been so blamed busy."

Somehow Midge survived the next hour, in spite of her muttered wish to expire. It didn't even do any good to suggest that, seeing this was Mr. Thomas' last night with the train, he might like to spend the evening at the Biddle fire. Her own mother even agreed to that, but her father, being a man and, therefore, multheaded, put his foot down.

"No, sir," said Mr. McCall. "John eats with us, and that's that. There are a lot of things I wish to talk to him about, because it looks like I'll be assuming his responsibilities as leader of the train. John has a lot of things in his head I'd like to learn more of."

"Heaven help us if a butter can learn from that creature," muttered Midge. "He doesn't even know money is the root of all evil."

It was nearly dark when John came riding back to report his judgment correct. The band of young Indians had kept right on going and were miles away by now.

Relief flowed through the travelers and a ring of supper fires sprang up. Before long, his face scrubbed and drops of water glistening on his tawny hair, John Thomas sat cross-legged at the McCall fire, a heaping plate balanced on his knees, and a steaming cup of black coffee sitting on the ground beside his right foot.

Eating with relish, John declared, "These are the best victuals I've had since the last time I ate with you."

"Midge is very handy," Mrs. McCall murmured, offhand. "The man who gets her will never have a chance to complain much at mealtime, if he'll only provide."

"Any woman worth her salt can cook," Midge contended, looking across at Vixen Biddle's fire. "It's no accomplishment."

"I'll grant it's not enough by itself," conceded John. "And I reckon a sensible man should look for more significant things in a woman he would take for a wife."

"About this Oregon place of yours," said Hollis. "What pulls you back there, John?"

"You've never seen a fairer land," John declared, very enthusiastically. "There's rich meadow and bottom land, and tall pine timber standing so thick on the hillsides a thousand castles could be built and you'd never see the dent. There's a fine piece of ground next to mine, too, Hollis. A house could be built on the bluff, where the creek runs down, so you'd have a fine view of the river. You'd look a long time and never find a better place."

"Not for me," Hollis stated, flatly. "No Oregon for me."

"Papa's absolutely right," Midge said, emphatically. "We detest Oregon, don't we, Papa?"

"I'm not saying we detest Oregon," said Hollis. "I'm just trying to tell John we're for California."

"You see there?" Midge jeered at John Thomas. "We're going to California."

JOHN stopped eating and shook his head, wonderingly. "I certainly envy you, Hollis. You have a trick I'd like to learn the secret of."

"And what trick's that?" Hollis inquired, puzzled.

"The trick of having your own way and making your women folks agree. You say you're for California, and they're for California without one word against it or any cross pulling."

Hollis sneaked a cautious look at his wife and cleared his throat. "Why, that's no trick at all," he said, tentatively. "If a man's a man, and he says he's for California, he's for California, that's all." After squinting at Sara again he went on, even more boldly.

"Yes, sir, it's just the matter of a man having his own way, which is natural, I suppose. You want to go some place, so you tell your woman where, and she goes along. Of course," he hastily added, "you have to be sure of your woman. You have to be certain she loves you with high regard. And, come to think of it, how do they ever know they love you like that unless you tell them so. I've found women, generally, to be wonderfully obstinate creatures who know every-

thing pretty much, except their own minds."

"Yes, sir," said John Thomas, awed. Mrs. McCall unclenched her teeth long enough to say, a little grimly, "John Thomas, just where is it you turn north for Oregon?"

"About five miles along the trail, in the morning," John told her. "That's the parting of the ways, at Raft River. Only I won't be parting, I reckon. I guess I'm for California, too."

The ensuing silence was so profound that John Thomas lifted his head and looked at all of them, a little defiantly. "In spite of Hollis' good advice, I can't come to believe him. A woman beats me."

"Why you—" said Midge, rising to stand over him, her clenched fists on her hips. "—you couldn't win a foot race if everybody else had their head in a sack. How dare you tell my father you can't believe him when he's absolutely right and you know it. Imagine you being spiffed by Vixen Biddle. Hal! You don't have to follow her to California. Hasn't she been hanging around your neck ever since we left Independence? She'd follow you clean to Oregon and gone, if you'd just snap your fingers. But no— You're scared! And you're blind. And you haven't the brains to stuff goose feathers in a pillow case."

John Thomas put aside his plate and rose to his full height to tower over Midge. "And just who is it who wants Vixen Biddle to follow him to Oregon and is afraid to ask her?" he wanted to know.

"You do!" flared Midge. "And there is absolutely no reason for you to be afraid because, even if you don't think so, Papa is right!"

"All right, he's right!" John stormed back at her. "And I'll prove it, right now." Reaching out, he caught Midge by her waist and lifted her so that he could look directly into her eyes.

"And now you listen to me, Miss Midget McCall," he said. "I'm not keeping on for California because of Vixen Biddle. I'm keeping on because I can't talk your paw into turning north with me. And if you weren't as blind as you say I am, you'd know that, too. And if you had half the brains you say I haven't got, you would know I have only been hanging around Vixen Biddle to make you jealous, which is the way a handy man with the ladies told me to do if I chose to make the woman I love come to town."

"Any man who ever told you that ought to have his head fixed," fumed Midge. "A lot any man knows about a woman. And you put me down this minute before I make you sorry. All I can do is cook, and a man has to

look for more significant things in a woman he would marry; you said so yourself."

"That's for dead certain," John fumed right back at her. "And I found them things in you, too. Who thought about guarding the rest of the people when they ran to look at a mountain? Who had the presence to look after the children while every one else ran around losing their heads and tried to be heroes? And I'll tell you something else while I'm of a mind to do it. Even if you hadn't done all those things and couldn't even boil a kettle of sand, I'd love you, anyway. You love me, too, and you're turning north with me, tomorrow, because I say so. Or are you going to stand there and tell me you won't, and make a great big liar out of your paw?"

"You're the meanest man I know of," Midge sobbed, happily, throwing her arms around John's neck. "I told you, twice, that Papa was right, so what can I say now except that you are right about me loving you, because I do."

WHEN John Thomas finally put Midge down and became conscious of reality, once more, he saw Mr. and Mrs. McCall come walking out of the deep night shadows behind their wagon. Mrs. McCall's soft lips were set firmly and her eyes flashed fire. Mr. McCall had, somehow, acquired a strangely harassed air.

"John," muttered Hollis, "are you sure that place next to yours is still there?"

"Dead certain," said John. "And I sure wish I could convince you—"

"You have," said Hollis, glancing sideways at his wife. "You've convinced me for sure. Sara and I are for Oregon, the same as you. I figured it would be nice to be neighbors and watch our grandchildren sprout. The idea came to my head the minute you spoke to Midge."

"That's right," said Mrs. McCall, smiling up at her hulking husband, and then she took Midge by the arm. "If we're turning north, tomorrow, you young folks will have to get married, tonight, because the Reverend Carter is bound for California. Lands, this is certainly short notice in which to give you much advice."

When they were out of ear-shot, John Thomas looked gratefully at Hollis and said, "I don't know how to thank you proper. That was real good advice you gave me, tonight, even if I was slow in believing it."

"Huhl!" grunted Hollis. "The best advice you got tonight, you paid no attention to. You mind when Midge said, 'A lot any man knows about a woman'? Don't ever forget that, son. That's gospel."



BEWARE THE INCOME TAX GYPS

The phony "tax expert" in the corner drug or cigar store will promise you a big saving on your return, a saving you can spend when you get out of jail.

By ROBERT J. PIERCE

■ A stranger moved into a small Nebraska town one cold January day, set up shop in the rear of a drug store, and before nightfall had the citizenry jabbering excitedly about the bonanza that suddenly had been plunked into their midst. He had hung up a sign proclaiming that he was an "income tax consultant" and the first hesitant clients exited wonderingly from the store mouthing glowing reports.

Not only was he slashing the tax the folks had expected to pay come March 15, he was getting them unheard-of refunds on the money they already had shelled out. And his fees? Not a dime out of the customers' pockets. All he wanted was a percentage of the dough

he saved for them, cash they would have paid Uncle Sam anyway! How could anyone lose on such a deal?

It sounded great, and before long the drug store was jammed with clients. It wasn't until many months later that Internal Revenue agents lowered the boom.

The "tax consultant" was an expert all right, but in matters of larceny, and his customers learned the painful news the hard way. The returns he had filled out for them were uniformly phony—not only were the townsfolk forced to refund their refunds, they had to shell out the real tax due the Government, plus stiff penalties and interest.

It was a king-size swindle, but by no means the only one of its type. Tax time is here, and so are innumerable slick chislers like this one, who are getting in their licks right now all over the country, defrauding countless thousands. These are the fly-by-night gypsies who swing into action some ten weeks before the March 15th get-it-up deadline, and who rake in enough shekels to keep them in Cadillacs until the next harvest time rolls around.

They call themselves "tax consultants," "income tax service," or they simply hang out a shingle with the word "tax" written large; but grand-scale rooking is their real business. No one knows how much cash they mulct from unsuspecting family heads all over the country, but estimates run into the many millions annually.

HENRY L. HOFFMAN, district director of Internal Revenue in charge of Brooklyn and Long Island, in New York, says frankly it's a big racket. Another high department official asserts that Internal Revenue men now are conducting an intensive drive to ferret them out. But he admits that "these heels are slippery cels" and the surest way of driving them out of business is to sound a clanging warning to all taxpayers to stay away from their desk spaces in droves.

Understand this important point right away. The majority of people who help you fill out your Form 1040, for a fee, are honest and reliable. These are, of course, the lawyers and accountants whose business it is to know the complexities of the tax structure, and who pass on their knowledge to you. They may also be bookkeepers, school teachers—and others who want to pick up some legitimate sideline income just before deadline time.

But, in a few short years, lowered exemptions and higher tax rates have caused the burden of income taxes to be shifted to the millions of John Does who carry lunch boxes, stand behind counters, or work in offices. And this

enormous increase in the number of taxpayers has attracted a horde of unscrupulous fakes, who now are conning the public on a high, wide and exceedingly handsome scale.

The big question is just this: How can you tell the difference between a phony, who can cost you nothing but grief, and the honest tax expert?

It isn't hard, particularly if you know a few things about how the quacks operate.

They hoist a few danger flags which you can easily recognize. First, on the question of fees. You are intrigued by an "expert's" advertisement, or someone may have told you about this wonder lad who can save you so much moola. You call and ask what he charges for his service. He rarely cites a specific fee—come on in and we'll talk it over. He does promise that you won't regret it. The flag is being raised.

In his office, you get an effusive greeting and the interview starts. Instead of asking you what deductions you have, he tells you. He invents exemptions, adding an extra dependent, or several, jots down the non-existent cow that died during the year, jacks up your donations to charity, "just to take care of those little things you may have forgotten." The flag is flying.

On your income, he tells you to forget about that extra few hundred you made on the side during the year. Not important, he says, and the tax boys will never find out. That danger banner is snapping squarely in your face, because, if you agree, you've stepped off the deep end on income-tax fraud. You've placed yourself in the line of fire from Uncle Sam's T-men, who throw the book at tax dodgers who deliberately conceal income.

Beware, too, the guy who promises you a refund before he even takes a gander at your figures. One faker told me, half in jest: "We consider it an insult if a client goes out of this office without a refund." He didn't say that his clients can get insulted much more pointedly by a Federal judge later on.

WATCH out for the fellow who won't sign the return he fills out. Some will tell you: "We do the same work as a Certified Public Accountant but there's a joker in the law that keeps us from signing returns." There's no joker. He is permitted to sign, right in the space at the bottom left for the signature of the person, other than the taxpayer, who prepared the form. Legitimate tax people sometimes write after their names something to the effect that the form was filled out by them, from information given by the taxpayer,

just to be on the safe side. But they sign.

A few gyps are real cute. They sign names with a specially prepared ink which disappears handily before the form hits the tax-collector's desk.

New schemes are devised constantly by the slick operators to chisel on what's coming to the Government. In a small Western town, one promoter concocted a novel, and needless to say illegal, method of increasing the deduction for medical expenses by certain of his clients.

It seems his customers were in the habit of cashing checks at the local grocery, hardware store or doctor's office. When a patient dropped in to pay a bill, the doctor would willingly cash his check. At the end of the tax year, the patient, on advice of his consultant, would deduct the amounts of the checks cashed by the doc as "medical expenses." And he had the cancelled checks as proof. Internal Revenue agents soon cracked down on that dodge.

SWINDLERS would find the pickings considerably less lush if more people realized that Uncle Sam's tax sleuths are mighty hep guys. Then they wouldn't fall for the line that the government "will never find out." Understand this: During the many years it has been in the business, the Government has accumulated some highly complex data, a lot of it secret, about income, deductions and other things which influence the payment of taxes.

Take, for instance, the question of tipping. Secret surveys are made of restaurants in various price ranges, so the agents know pretty well what the average waiter earns in tips, whether he balances trays at plush night spots or at the corner beanery. They know that bellhops in a particular Chicago hotel average \$40 monthly in tips, so if the lads report less, Uncle Sam taps them on the shoulders.

The agents can tell instantly if they are being pitched a curve. When an insurance man presented a neatly written list of business expenses, they saw at once that, in order to have paid the amount of gasoline taxes listed, he must have driven his car 300 miles every day of the year.

The wife of a plumber, who kept books for her husband, was proud of her little evasion dodge. She kept a simple set of records, with columns for personal and business expenses. When she bought a new car, she simply listed the amount as "plumbing supplies." Tax men tripped her up but wouldn't say how. But it could easily have been because the Internal Revenue Bureau has charts which show the exact percentages in relation

to sales for each expense item for which a plumber, or any other small businessman, spends money. The overstatement of a single item by almost \$4,000 could start the bells ringing instantly in an agent's head.

THERE are a few fallacies that keep cropping up each year as tax time rolls around. One of the most widely-accepted is that a reward of 10 percent of the levy collected is paid by the U.S. for information on tax evaders. Let's get the facts straight on this one and for all:

Unless you can present information or evidence which will save much expensive investigation, your reward will be the amount which the Government decides is the value of your services. Although there have been some cases in which huge rewards have been paid, the chances that an informer will receive more than a few dollars are practically nil.

A stern warning that these rewards also are taxable goes in the envelope with each check. Despite this, one informer "forgot" to list his reward on his own return. He had plenty of time to reflect on his forgetfulness in jail.

Another widespread fallacy is that Uncle Sam is a hard taskmaster and that you've just got to get up that tax, or else. Listen to the case of one man whom we'll call Rick, who had particularly rough sledding in 1952. First, his partner absconded with most of the firm's liquid assets. Then his wife and two children got sick, and the medical bills were enormous. Climaxing everything, Rick suffered a mental breakdown and was unable to work for several weeks. Thus, at tax time, Rick had been unable to squeeze enough cash from his small business to get it up for Uncle Sam. With visions of a stiff fine, and maybe a jail sentence, he went to the Internal Revenue people and told his story.

There was no fine, no threat of jail. Instead, Rick was told he could sign an affidavit stating why he couldn't pay his taxes. He entered into an agreement with the government, giving him an extended period to pay up. Of course, he had to pay interest on the debt. And, of course, a deal of this kind is allowed only in legitimate cases and after a searching investigation of the facts. But the big point is that Uncle Sam is not an unyielding, stone-faced gent who won't listen to reason.

Still another fallacy is the oft-repeated crack that you can't fight the Government—or that only the well-heeled who can afford high-priced legal talent can go to bat in the courts against the U.S. on tax claims. The truth is that you can bring the

Collector of Internal Revenue to court, that you can fight your own case without hiring a lawyer, and that you've got a *better than even* chance of winning!

Ever hear of the Tax Court? These courts exist in more than 50 American cities, and they're open to anyone who disagrees with the Internal Revenue people on tax matters. One judge declared recently that, since the court was founded, the taxpayers have won in more than 50 percent of the cases.

Cases like this: Marcus Benson, a California State policeman, deducted \$177.22 on his return, the cost of his uniforms and the cleaning bill, claiming a necessary business expense. The tax officials nixed the deduction, said Benson owed another \$6.83. The cop disagreed. He took the matter to the Tax Court, defended himself—and won the case.

WANT to save money, legitimately? Then here's some sound advice:

First, keep records. Get yourself several small notebooks, labelling them contributions, taxes, medical expenses and miscellaneous. Whenever you spend money for anything you think may be deductible, write it down. Keep itemized invoices, receipted bills, cancelled checks. If you suffer damage to your property, due to fire or storm, establish the amount of damage right away by photos or an appraisal. If you do lots of entertaining for business, establish charge accounts. Thus, when tax time comes round, you'll have a complete, accurate record.

Second, learn what you can deduct and what you can't. There are any number of things you can legitimately put down—things most people never realized. As a matter of fact, tax authorities get a big giggle from the spectacle of taxpayers racking their brains to list false deductions, when they could get the same results by putting down things to which they actually are entitled.

For example, how about that dining-room set and those old suits you gave the Salvation Army? Like most people, you probably thought only cash donations are deductible. Actually, you can write down the fair value of any items you donate to an organized charitable institution.

An excellent way of learning these legitimate little gimmicks is to take a short tax course, now being offered by many adult education departments all over the country in the local school systems.

Third, learn the difference between *avoiding* taxes and *evading* them. The difference is simple—a couple of years in a Federal pen. If you avoid taxes, you use legal means to cut

down the amount due; if you evade them, you don't pay levies you really owe.

Tax evasion is what put Al Capone in the clink. Tax avoidance helped Bill Jones save hundreds of dollars legally. In 1951, Bill sold a section of land on which he realized a taxable profit of \$10,000. Since Bill earned a salary during the year, the addition of \$10,000 would have pushed him into a much higher tax bracket. So Bill sold the land on the "installment" basis. This meant he would have to pay tax on only the proportionate share of the profits received in 1951. By spreading the purchaser's payments over two years, Bill saved himself hundreds of dollars.

And, fourth, don't fall into the hands of a chiseling tax "expert." How do you avoid them? Listen:

1. Be wary of the stranger in town who suddenly pops up at desk space in the drug store, barber shop or luncheonette. Be especially on guard if he starts bragging about how much money he's going to save you. If he actually offers refunds as a comeon, he's dynamite.

2. Get a definite commitment on what he's going to charge. Say goodbye, firmly and not necessarily politely, if he mentions any kind of percentage deal, sharing in the refund, or in what he's saving you.

3. Patronize only people you know personally or who have been around town a while, or whose reputations are attested to by persons of integrity.

4. Make absolutely certain that he writes on the form whatever figures you give him. Then, when he's finished, take the return and file it yourself. Don't leave it with him—he might very well alter the figures after you've gone, and leave you holding the bag.

5. Don't let him talk you into blowing up your deductions to fantastic proportions, with the sales pitch that the tax agents won't find out. They will. In a short time, these immensely inflated figures will collapse like a bride's first cake, and you'll be mighty sorry you ever started with him.

6. If you can't find a man to help you, or you're not certain of his reliability, let the Government do it for you. Take the word of an Internal Revenue official: "We've got 10,000 competent persons all over the U.S., ready and willing to give you help for nothing." To get a list of places where to find them, simply ask at the office of your local Internal Revenue director.

You work hard enough for your dough. Follow these tips, and none of it will help fatten the wallets of the income tax "experts"—who are expert only in living off your income. •

The Day We Won The War

When things were tough, they called me sergeant and said I deserved a commission. But later—that was a different story. I was lucky to stay a corporal.

By JON CLEARY I'm tired of hearing about who won the war—World War II, I mean. The Russians claim they won it, and the R.A.F. and the U.S. Marines; and I've heard some people say the Germans and the Japanese won it. The truth is, I won it. Well, not me alone. There were six of us, and we won it on the morning of Easter Monday, 1941—which was a fair time before the rest of you woke up to the fact that the show was over.

To set the record straight at the beginning, don't get the idea I was a general back in those days. If I had been, I wouldn't be here talking to you—I'd be writing a book about it. No, I was just a plain two-stripe corporal, the postal orderly with X Brigade Headquarters of the Australian Imperial Forces—and if you think *that's* a soft job, just try it in the next war. Sometimes I used to wish all soldiers and their relatives and friends back home were illiterate.

We had just finished the retreat that came to be

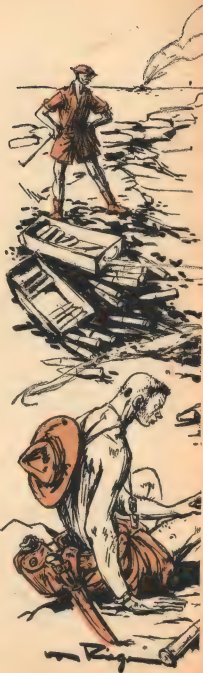




Illustration by WILLIAM VON RIEGEN

MARCH, 1954

known as the Benghazi Handicap. Rommel's Afrika Korps had chased us right across Libya, and now we were preparing to hole up in Tobruk. We got there early in April, dug in, and waited. The Germans by-passed us, and there we were stuck out in the middle of the desert, miles from help or hope. None of us dreamed that we'd still be there in November.

Well, it was the day before Good Friday. The brigade major had given me a cave to work in: it was his idea that the men's mail must be protected at all costs—didn't mention a word about the safety of yours truly. I was down there, sorting letters, when Bluey Plover came down the rough steps I'd dug as an entrance.

"G'day, sport," Bluey was about six feet three and thin as a scream. He had a mop of red hair that was brassy now with dust, and as he talked his thin bony face cracked like that of a crumbling mummy. Behind his gas goggles his eyes were free of dust, and he winked at me as he grinned. "Come up and see what me and Skeeter brought home."

I WALKED ACROSS with Bluey to the small wadi where the kitchens had been set up. The ration truck, which Bluey drove, was parked down at the bottom of the wadi. Behind it was a field gun.

"It's an Itie 75," Bluey said. "There's another one where that came from. And a stack of ammo. I'm going back for it now."

Skeeter Murphy came clambering up the side of the wadi. He was the Brigade H.Q. cook, a wiry little bloke with a head as bald as the desert and a face you'd never have shown to your kids. He'd worked as a strapper in a racing stable before the war, and some of us reckoned he still thought he was feeding horses.

"Not bad, eh?" He nodded down toward the gun. "I been wanting to have a crack at the Jerries, ever since they blew up me kitchen over at Derna."

"But what do you know about firing artillery?"

"What's it matter what we know?" Bluey pushed the gas goggles up on to his head, and disturbed a small halo of dust. "You just shove the shell in the breech, pull the trigger and away she goes!"

I shrugged. But that afternoon I went back over to the wadi. At the best of times we're all too curious for our own good, and there in Tobruk, with no distraction but the flies and the daily Stuka raids, our curiosity itched as much as our desert sores.

Bluey had brought up the other Italian gun from down by the harbor. I was standing there watching him, Skeeter and young Joey Baxter

working on it, when the Brigadier came by.

"Hello, corporal, what's going on?" The Brig was a nuggety little man with the saddest face I've ever seen on a happy man. One look at him and you tabbed him as just one step this side of suicide; then you got to know him and you found he enjoyed everything, even the Army.

"We found these guns down by the harbor, sir." Mind you, I didn't want a thing to do with them. But the Brig had spoken to me because I was senior there, and I couldn't let the others down. "The boys had thought of having a crack at the Jerries."

"Good idea," said the Brig, almost smiling. "Let's have a go now."

That was one of the few things I found wrong with the Brig. Too impetuous. But I couldn't argue with him; and anyhow, Bluey and the others were already scooting around getting things ready. There was nothing I could do but join in.

Ever fired an artillery piece? Well, there's quite a drill to it. Very precise, almost like some sort of modern ballet movement. That is, *regular* artillery drill. What we went through that afternoon looked more like a quartet of blokes suffering from the DT's. We were down in the wadi, so that we had to raise the barrel of the gun to shoot over the lip. I went up to the edge of the wadi and looked out on the desert. About fifteen hundred yards away the ground rose a bit, and it seemed logical that there might be something down behind it.

"Range, fifteen hundred yards," I said, professional as hell, trying to impress the Brig.

Bluey was on the range-finder. "This thing ain't in yards. It's marked in meters."

I wasn't going to be flummoxed by that. "Range, fifteen hundred meters."

Bluey fiddled around, then called back that the range was right. I looked back over my shoulder, and damn' near died. The gun was pointing straight at me!

"Get that thing away!" I yelled, and slowly Bluey swung the barrel round. I then realized that, besides giving him the range, I also had to give him a bearing. I did a quick estimate, then said, "Bearing two-seven-owe degrees."

"Don't mean a thing to me," said Bluey. "The works on this piece have been cracked. Just tell me if she's pointing in the right direction."

I didn't enjoy the next couple of minutes, but the Brig was standing there waiting patiently for us to get cracking, so I had to go ahead. I stood up on the edge of the wadi, on what I reckoned was the line to the

target, and Bluey lined the gun up on my head.

"Stand still!" he said. "How can I get a line on you, if you're bobbing about like a rabbit?"

I glanced at Skeeter, who was holding the lanyard, ready to fire the gun as soon as we gave the word. He was fidgeting about, hopping from one leg to the other, and I was dead scared he'd fall over and pull the trigger while I was still up there on the end of the barrel.

"Righto," said Bluey. "She's all jake."

I moved farther along the wadi bank, and the Brig came up and joined me.

"Give them the order to fire, corporal," he said.

"Fire!" I yelled, and the next moment there was a roar and a cloud of dust from down in the wadi. Then out on the distant slope there was a sudden black and yellow mushroom as the shell landed.

"Not bad at all," said the Brig. "Get them to fire another, corporal. Better increase your range a bit, too." "Yes, sir," I said, and despite myself began to feel some pride in our amateur artillery. "Gun crew! Up range, three hundred meters!"

There was no answer from the gun crew. Then the dust cleared and I saw Bluey picking himself up from the ground about six feet from the gun. Skeeter was stretched out flat, and Joey Baxter was sitting on the ground nursing a bleeding knee.

The Brig and I scrambled down the side of the wadi. "What happened?" I said.

"I dunno," said Bluey. "When Skeeter pulled the trigger I just went ack-over-Charlie backwards."

Skeeter sat up, dazedly shaking his head. "Did the shell come out the wrong end?"

It was the merriest I'd ever seen the Brig. He wasn't actually laughing, but he didn't look quite so mournful. "You forgot to allow for the recoil. You'll know better next time—"

Then we all dropped flat. We could hear the shell coming, and a moment later it landed up at the end of the wadi. For the next ten minutes there was nothing we could do but lie there and wait for the Germans to give up. At last the barrage eased off, and we stood up.

"We drew the flies then," said the Brig, and I couldn't tell whether he cared or not. "We'll have another crack tomorrow, corporal."

He had just turned to go when a desert buggy came bumping down the wadi. It jerked to a stop and a dusty burly figure jumped out.

"Who the blazes was firing this gun?" It was the Divisional Brigadier

of Artillery—or the B.R.Ack, as he's called—and no one, not even the padres, had much time for him. "Who gave you permission to shoot?"

"Hello, Perce," said our Brig. "We woke things up a bit, didn't we?"

The B.R.Ack almost choked. "You! You mean, you were here while all this was going on?"

"Wouldn't have missed it for a trip back to Australia," said our Brig. "Why, what's the matter, Perce?"

"But firing artillery is my job!" The B.R.Ack glared around at Bluey, Skeeter, Joey and me; then abruptly he jerked his head at the Brig. "Come up to your office, George. I want to talk to you."

THAT evening the Brig called me up to his tent. "I had to compromise with the B.R.Ack, corporal. It seems that we upset the scheme too much if we just go and have a crack when we feel like it. From now on we have to fit in with the general fire plan."

"Perhaps we'd better scrap the whole deal, sir." I was ready to toss it in without any excuses at all. "I don't think the boys will get much fun out of being regimented."

"We'll do no such thing!" said the Brig. "If I have to come down and pull the lanyard myself, we'll send off half a dozen rounds every afternoon. Now just go and tell the gun crew. We fire tomorrow at sixteen hundred hours."

I saluted and left him. I knew what was wrong with the Brig. When he had been a battalion commander, he had always been in the thick of the fighting. Now here at Brigade he had begun to feel that he was only fighting the war through someone else. Personally, it's the way I'd prefer to fight a war. Which is perhaps why I didn't get to be a brigadier.

But next afternoon at four o'clock the Brig was somewhere out on the perimeter. The Germans had attacked that morning and all through the day the heat had been on. It wasn't a major attack, more just a probing by Rommel's armor to find our weak spots, but early in the morning things had looked bad enough for the Brig to go out to the battalions on the perimeter.

"I reckon we oughta have a go," Skeeter said. "All day I been sitting here while the Jerries have been pounding hell outa me. They blew up another one of me ovens this morning."

"I don't know that we ought to do anything without the Brig's okay," I said. Things were quiet now, with no artillery fire, but out on the perimeter we could hear occasional rifle fire and, once or twice, the hard bark of the guns on the German tanks.

"He said we were to shoot at four

o'clock," Bluey said. "He ain't cancelled the order."

We argued for ten minutes, then I gave in. I crawled up to the rim of the wadi and looked out. At first I could see nothing worth having a shot at, and I was glad; we could pack up and go back to work, instead of wasting ammunition. Then in a dip in the desert, about a mile away, I saw something that looked like the turret of a Mark IV tank. As I stared at it, it began to move. Cursing my luck, I knew we had a target.

I gave the range, crawled along the lip of the wadi so that Bluey could line the gun on my head for bearing, then got out of the way.

"Fire!" I yelled.

For a moment I thought the Jerries had dropped a bomb on us. There was the most awful ruddy bang, dust whipped up into the air, and something hard smacked the ground about a foot from my face. I stood up and slid down into the bottom of the wadi. Smoke was mixed with dust, and I staggered through it toward the gun.

Ever seen a miracle? Well, we had one that afternoon in the wadi. The shell had exploded in the breach, and by rights Bluey, Skeeter and Joey should have been eligible for those memorial plaques you see everywhere now. But no—when I got through the dust and smoke to the gun, the three of them were just picking themselves up from the ground. Bluey's shirt and shorts had been blown off him, and he looked sort of silly standing there just in his boots. Skeeter had a deep gash in his forehead and his face was covered in blood, but he didn't look any the worse for it. Joey had a couple of scratches and he'd had his shorts blown off, too. But none of them had been as badly knocked about as the gun. It was a total wreck.

"WE was booby-trapped!" Skeeter was more angry than hurt. "They must of fixed that shell and left it for us—"

"Pull your head in," I said. "You were just unlucky. I've seen some of our own shells go up like that. Now if you'd listened to me—"

"Corporal." Naked but for his boots, so long and thin he looked like a normal man who had spent some time on the rack, Bluey did his best to look menacing. "One more peep out you—"

What could I do? The book of rules says an NCO must look after his men, but these bunnies didn't want my care. I can be dignified when I like (my old man used to be an undertaker), so I turned on my heel and strode up the wadi. They could blow themselves to smithereens for all I cared.

At the top of the wadi I met the B.R.Ack. With him was the Brigade major and half a dozen other odds-and-sods rushing down to see what had caused the commotion.

"What happened down there, corporal?" The B.R.Ack looked ready to hammer me into the ground.

"The gun blew up, sir."

"Anybody killed?"

"No, sir."

The B.R.Ack looked disappointed. "Consider yourself under open arrest."

I tell you, you could have knocked me over with a handful of beer froth. There I was, trying to act rationally and keep the boys in line, and now the B.R.Ack had jumped on me. I'm convinced that the Army only created non-commissioned ranks so it would have someone it could blame for everything that went wrong. How many generals have you seen under open arrest?

THE Brig came back that night and I was called up before him. The B.R.Ack couldn't try me, since I wasn't on his establishment; and our Brig could have left me to be dealt with by the brigade major. But he did the right thing by me and had me hauled up before himself.

"The B.R.Ack charges you with conduct prejudicial et cetera, corporal." He looked really miserable. "What have you to say?"

I was stuck. If I pleaded Not Guilty, then Bluey and the others might cop it in the neck. "Guilty, sir, with extenuating circumstances."

"Good enough." The Brig visibly brightened; he didn't even ask me to explain the extenuating circumstances. "Charge dismissed."

Then he sat back in his chair. "How's the other gun, corporal?"

"Not too good, sir. It has no range finder. You'd just have to fire it by guess-work. And the working parts of it are pretty rusty."

"Think you could have it working by sixteen hundred hours tomorrow afternoon?"

"Right, sir!" I cried in ringing tones. "The gun will be ready for firing tomorrow at sixteen hundred!"

Bluey, Skeeter and Joey were waiting for me outside.

"How'd you go, sport?" Bluey said.

"Charge dismissed," I said, and I sounded as if I should have been in Hollywood. "We shoot again tomorrow!"

But next morning when we had a look at the second Italian gun, I lost some of my enthusiasm. It was in much worse condition than the gun that had been wrecked, and looked as if it would fall apart as soon as we fired the first shell. We worked on it all morning; then when the first air-

raid started I went back to my cave and sorted letters again.

By four o'clock that afternoon we were ready to shoot. Once more the Brig was out on the perimeter, so again everything was left to me.

With no range finder and no traversing arc for finding a bearing, firing the gun was almost like shooting with an over-sized pistol. Bluey lined the gun up on my head for bearing, then we took a guess at elevation for range. We had all become scared of another shell exploding in the breach, so we had decided to fire it by remote control. Once Bluey had got everything set, he, Skeeter and Joey retired up the wadi, trailing a firing lanyard about thirty yards long behind them.

"Gun crew ready!" Despite myself, I was beginning to enjoy my role of artillery commander.

"All set, sport!" bellowed Bluey.

"Fire!"

SKEETER jerked on the lanyard, the gun jumped, and the next moment I saw the shell burst about a hundred yards short of two Mark IV's that were suddenly appearing along the crest of a slight slope, trying to draw our anti-tank guns into firing and giving away their positions.

I knew that our anti-tank guns, small two-pounders, were outgunned by the cannon of the Mark IV's, and they had been given orders to keep quiet till the tanks came almost into point-blank range. The plan had worked yesterday, but the Germans were still hoping our anti-tank gunners could be tempted into exposing their position. Over on my right I could hear the B.R.Ack's artillery firing at something out of my sight. We had these two tanks to ourselves if we could only get the range.

"Up range one hundred meters!" I yelled.

Bluey and the others were already back at the gun. "Pull your head in!" Bluey shouted. "I'll bet the B.R.Ack's gunners didn't talk to him that way. 'How the hell can I work out meters on this thing without a range finder?'"

Ever tried snap-shooting with a field gun? "Raise the barrel!"

Bluey raised the barrel, Joey shoved a shell into the breach, slammed it shut, then away the three of them scampered up the wadi again.

"Fire!"

Skeeter yanked on the lanyard, and this time the shell landed just beyond the tanks. They pulled up, looking a bit worried, and I shouted to the others to hurry. We lowered the barrel a fraction, swung it a bit to the right to follow the tanks as they began moving again, whipped in another shell, then Bluey and the others scooted up the wadi. Joey tripped and fell headlong, but we couldn't

wait for him. The tanks were almost out of sight now over the crest of the slope.

"Fire!"

I saw the smoke and dust come up in a dark cone, wiping out both tanks, then it cleared and I could see one of the tanks. It had stopped dead, and a moment later men began to tumble out of the turret. Somewhere out front a Vickers machine-gun opened up, and I saw two of the Germans straighten up, then topple over.

"You ruddy beauty!"

Then I saw the two other shell bursts rising behind the crest of the slope. For a moment I couldn't believe my eyes—the B.R.Ack's mob had cut in on our target. I stood up and called the B.R.Ack and his cohorts everything my cousin, who's in politics, had taught me. Then I turned and slid down the bank.

"We got a tank! And now the flaming arty blokes have shoved their noses in!"

"I dunno how we got the tank," said Skeeter, and swung open the breach. "This shell didn't go off."

I could have wept. The shell that had hit the tank had been one from the regular guns. I stared at our shell lying cradled in Joey's arms, and what I had to say about Mussolini's munition workers doesn't bear repeating in this company. It was even worse than what I'd called the B.R.Ack.

NEXT day we were too busy to do any shooting. The Germans kept probing at the perimeter, and in the early afternoon we had a Stuka raid that destroyed four weapon pits. We were all called out to dig more pits, and it was dark before we'd finished.

That night the Germans attacked.

They kept it up all night, and no one got any sleep, not even the war correspondents. It was a moonlit night, and out on the desert you could see the dead lying like men asleep. Some dead Germans were hung on the barbed wire entanglements, and because they were still on their feet you had the idea they weren't really dead but just shamming. It was late at night, after a quiet period, when the barrage started.

They laid the shells down all around us. Skeeter's kitchens went sky-high, the roof of my cave fell in on me, and we lost six men killed. But the worst of it landed over in the artillery positions. Just at dawn the B.R.Ack came staggering up through our lines to the Brig's office.

The Brig came out to meet him. "How are things, Perce?"

"Terrible." The B.R.Ack had really been done over. He slumped down and sat there in the sand looking old and worried. "There's not a

gun left, George. Not one! If the Jerries come in on this sector, we're wide open to them!"

I must have looked about as mournful as the Brig. I walked down to the wadi, and Bluey said, "Why so sad, sport?"

I gave them the bad news.

"I knew I should of joined the Navy," Skeeter said.

Joey sipped his tea. "How are things on the rest of the perimeter?"

"They're holding there," I said. "This is the weak spot."

Bluey stood up suddenly and tossed his mug of tea away. The tin cup rattled against a rock, and it was a loud sound in that early morning quietness. "I've never seen such a pack of old women! You're ready to toss it in before the Jerries have even attacked! How do you know he's going to come in on this sector?"

We didn't have to answer him. We heard the boom of the guns, and the next moment the whistle of the shells; there was nothing to do but lie down again and hope for the best. They had us well bracketed this time: it didn't seem possible that we could go on escaping being hit. I was scared silly, and beside me Skeeter was doing his best to dig himself a slit trench with his tin mug. The air was full of smoke and sand and zipping pieces of hot metal, and I began to think of all the things I wished I'd done while I was alive and had the chance.

Then abruptly the barrage stopped. I sat up, then after a moment got to my feet and shakily crawled up to the rim of the wadi. Through the drifting smoke and dust I could dimly see the stretch of desert beyond the barbed wire. At first I wasn't sure, then suddenly I knew the Germans were on their way.

"They're coming! Tanks!"

I must have shouted louder than I thought, because a moment later I heard someone yelling through the haze, then the Brig and the B.R.Ack came clambering up the side of the wadi.

They took one look and the B.R.Ack let out a howl of anguish. "There's about a dozen of them! We haven't got a chance!"

Now don't ask me why I suddenly got heroic. Even now I get the shakes when I think of it; but I reckon that morning I must have felt so hopeless I was past caring about caution.

"By crickey, yes we have!" I whirled round and shouted to Bluey and the others. "Hitch the truck to the Itie gun! We're going into the anti-tank business!"

I slid down the wadi bank. I grabbed a shell and slung it up into the back of Bluey's truck. Joey caught the idea, and began doing the same

thing. Skeeter and Bluey were joined by the Brig and the B.R.Ack, and the four of them swung the trail of the gun around and hitched it to the back of the truck.

"All aboard!" I yelled.

Bluey jumped up behind the wheel, I swung in beside him, and as the truck started off up the wadi, Skeeter, Joey, the Brig and the B.R.Ack leaped on behind. We bounced up out of the wadi and swung right down toward the wire. We were out in the open now, and our only hope was that, in the dust and smoke still floating around, the Germans might not wake up to what we were doing till we'd had a chance to set things up. Bluey drove that five-ton truck as if it were a jeep, and I could hear the shells rolling around in the back like empty beer barrels. I looked back through the open canopy and at any other time would have died laughing at the sight of the Brig, the B.R.Ack, Skeeter and Joey leaping about like aborigines in a corroboree as they tried to dodge the rolling shells. I didn't think about any of the shells exploding—I only think about those sort of things now, which is why I often sweat on a cold day.

Bluey swung the truck round in a tight arc, jerked it to a stop, and we all piled out. We unslung the gun, pointed it in the general direction of the approaching tanks, then I brought the barrel down till it was aiming straight ahead, and as I did the first of the tanks came up out of a slight dip ahead of us.

"Load!" I cried.

Bluey handed the Brig a shell. "Here, sport!"

The Brig took it and whipped it into the breach. There was no time now to worry about a long lanyard and whether the shell might explode in the breach.

"Fire!"

The gun jumped, but we all knew enough about recoil now not to be caught napping again. The shell landed about thirty yards short and I yanked the barrel up a bit. The Brig had already yanked out the empty shell case, and the B.R.Ack was shoving in another shell. Ever had a couple of brigadiers working for you?

"Fire!"

That one was on target. It smacked against the leading tank, and the big Mark IV pulled up as if a brick wall had fallen on it. Smoke poured out of it, then suddenly there was a burst of flame. Over in infantry trenches on our left there was a loud cheer, and I felt as if I'd just won the heavyweight championship.

But then things started to get hot. The other tanks, getting over their surprise, opened up with their cannon. A shell went right through the

engine of the truck, and I tried not to think about their hitting the back of the truck, where our own shells were. Our own four anti-tank guns, all we had left, then opened up, and that evened things up a bit.

The Germans wavered and then stopped. One or two of them turned and began to head back home. The others seemed undecided what to do; then one of them detached itself from the line and came on toward us. In every army there's always one cove who doesn't know when enough is enough, who always wants to show the other blokes, the sensible ones, how things should be done.

He came on steadily, getting bigger and bigger, like some great beast lumbering up toward us out of the smoke and dust. The Brig shoved a shell into the breach, and I took careful aim. If I missed the tank, he would be on us before we could reload.

He had stopped using his cannon, but was still firing with his machine-gun. I could hear the bullets hitting the side of the truck right behind us, but the rough ground over which he was travelling was preventing him from getting an accurate sight on us. At least I had that on him. Our gun was steady, and all I had to do was aim straight.

He was less than a hundred yards away when I yelled, "Fire!"

Ever scored a bull's-eye? It hit him smack in front, blew him apart as if someone had suddenly removed all the rivets, and I don't think I've ever seen a sight I've appreciated more. The other tanks had been creeping on behind him, but now they stopped; then abruptly they turned and went

scuttling away out of sight over the crest of the slope. We knew we hadn't seen the last of them, but we'd got them worried. They had known they had the measure of our small anti-tank guns, but they hadn't expected to run into a field gun firing at them over open sights. Open sights, did I say? No sights at all.

The Brig slapped me on the back and he was actually smiling. "Sergeant, you're a flaming wonder!"

"Sergeant?" said the B.R.Ack, who turned out to be quite a decent cove when we got to know him later. He deserves a commission and a decoration! With men like him and these other boys, we can't lose the war!"

"Lose it!" The Brig wasn't going to let the B.R.Ack have it all his own way in praising us; after all, we were his men. "We've won it! Perce, that last shot was the turning point of the war! We've found a way to stop the Jerry armor!"

Well, that's it. I wouldn't have told the story, but so many people have been claiming they won it, I just wanted to get the record straight.

The gun? It jammed next time we tried to fire, and in the end we had to dump it in Tobruk harbor. Bluey went back to driving another ration truck, Skeeter went back to cooking the same terrible meals, and young Joey took up opening cans of bully beef again.

Me? I went back to sorting letters, and was still a corporal postal orderly when the official end of the war came.

The Brig got the promotion, to a general, and the B.R.Ack got the decoration. That's the Army for you. •



"It's not exactly a late model but
we haven't driven it much lately."

By AMELIA DE SANTIS as told to HENRY LA COSSITT



could be a shoplifter

They come from every strata of society. Rich and poor, they bleed department stores for \$250,000,000 every year.

On a bright afternoon some years ago, two women entered one of Manhattan's more elegant Fifth Avenue department stores. They were handsome, beautifully dressed, poised. They shopped around casually, then went to the costume jewelry counter and stole \$40 worth of merchandise. As they started to leave, a store detective apprehended them and took them to the protection manager's office for questioning.

The women claimed diplomatic immunity. The diplomatic immunity was real enough, and the protection chief knew it; but he made sure there would be no more trouble for any store so far as one of the ladies was concerned: he informed her father through the nation's New York consulate.

When I tell this story, there are gulps of amazement because of the identity of the thieves. There need be none. In more than three decades of dealing with "boosters" I have found them to be, so to speak, universal. Since I was 15, I have matched wits with them in cheap stores along 14th Street, in Gimbel's, in Russeks', and presently in the exclusive 57th Street-Fifth Avenue area assigned to me by the Stores Mutual Protective Association.

SMPA is a New York organization primarily for the exchange and evaluation of information concerning shoplifters, imposters (crooks who steal through fake charge accounts or through accounts belonging to others), and other criminals who work the stores. Should a store detective see a known shoplifter, he notifies SMPA headquarters over the teletype, and all member stores are alerted that the thief is on the prowl.

I have apprehended thousands of shoplifters and have dealt in one way or another with thousands more. I find that no class, no type, no age (I've caught children of 6 as well as people in their 80's), no color is missing. In my book, *anybody* might be a shoplifter. Professional boosters, as this type of thief is

called, account for only 17 percent of the \$250,000,000 that is stolen annually from American drug, food and department stores. And shoplifting is on the increase.

Because amateur thieves account for most of this loss, only a small number of shoplifters are apprehended—although most of them are known—and only a fraction of these are brought to book. In New York, for example, apprehensions run to an average of 7,000 a year, although the known cases are many times that. The stores prefer it this way because it would be enormously time-consuming and expensive to make a case out of each boost. Only if the merchandise stolen amounts to more than \$10, or if the thief repeats, does the average store bother to apprehend the shoplifter.

Even where the theft is serious enough to warrant apprehension, the store still may not prosecute. The stolen merchandise is recovered and the booster let go with a warning. Stores consider prevention and protection more important than prosecution, except in the case of professionals.

A "gimmick" is a device used by a booster to conceal loot. It may be a man's suit box, tied as if for taking home; but one end may be pressed in so that articles may be swept swiftly inside, after which the panel snaps back into place. Or it may be a woman's handbag with hinged bottom, into which she sweeps merchandise from the counter.

Still another gimmick is a wad of chewing gum, used for small articles such as jewelry. The gum is stuck beneath the ledge of the counter and the item of loot is stuck into the gum. The thief then moves away and an accomplice picks up the article a few minutes later. We call such thieves "penny-weighters."

"Switch artists" deal with small stuff. They steal valuable articles and leave cheap imitations to deceive the sales people. The "bloomer artist" wears ample

bloomers beneath a billowing skirt with elastic at the waist, pulling out the elastic in skirt and bloomers and dropping the loot inside. When she is loaded up she may look a little broad in the beam and somewhat deformed, but the full skirt hides most of the bulk.

Other boosters try to make away with their loot by wearing the store's garments under their own clothes. To combat this technique, the usual number of garments permitted in the fitting room at one time is three; and if a customer carries overlong, a sales girl or a spotter will enter the fitting room to investigate. Some stores employ special spotters to watch the fitting rooms and observe the goings and comings of customers.

Boosters may be lone wolves, or they may work in pairs or very small groups. They manage to steal some curious things. One famous Fifth Avenue store, for example, is still wondering how an oriental rug that was hanging on its wall disappeared and how an antique cabinet clock got out of the place without someone spotting it. Another store was chagrined when a piano was boosted, although they knew how this was done. The thief simply hung around until an instrument was bought, then managed to tie fake tags on the piano legs and had it delivered to the address he wished. By the time the detectives could check on this he—and the piano—had vanished.

One of the most brazen of boosters worked both New York and Chicago stores and escaped detection for years. This thief was known as a salesman of antiques in both cities, and he was indeed that; the catch was that he stole antiques in New York to sell in Chicago, and vice versa. He sold articles to the very stores from which he stole items to sell in the other city. When caught, his storerooms in both towns were bursting with fine merchandise.

Perhaps the most spectacular theft this booster managed was that of an antique glass lamp from a Fifth Avenue store. The lamp was a huge affair, with pedestal and arms and no less than 300 dangling glass prisms. Our superbooster, clad in jumper and working calmly as if he belonged to the place, dismantled it, wrapped each part carefully in brown paper and removed it all without anyone suspecting him. He was arrested by a woman store detective who became suspicious as he was carrying out an antique vase.

One of the most common of all boosters is called inelegantly a "crotch artist." She thrusts articles up under her girdle, where they are held in place by the girdle and the pressure of her thighs. I have known fur coats to be stolen in this fashion. The thief straddles the coat, crams its edges up beneath the girdle and off she goes. Usually the crotch artist operates in the fitting room, but some coats have been stolen in this manner out on the floor.

Like most store detectives—and most of us are women—I know some judo and am pretty good with my fists. I'm also licensed to carry a gun, but I don't bother and neither do most of the other detectives. The only weapon I ever carried was a stick about a yard and a half long. That was years ago. Kids from a poor district used to come in to the store and try to

steal gadgets and toys, and I'd wham them across their bottoms with the stick when I caught them. They were usually little tykes.

It was here that I caught the 6-year-old. His mother, a charwoman, was his Fagin. We used to find a lot of that—the training of children to steal by their impoverished parents—but I have never known a professional Fagin in all my career.

I've heard that some store detectives enjoy roughing people up, but most of us avoid violence as we would smallpox. The modern store detective is quiet, soft-spoken, courteous. She uses persuasion rather than force. When she is sure someone has stolen something, her technique is to approach quietly, take the thief gently by the arm and begin talking. She starts with something like this:

"You've taken something you haven't paid for, and I want you to come with me."

She walks along then, talking quietly all the time, keeping a grip on the shoplifter's arm, steering her inconspicuously toward the protection office. The conversation and quiet firmness ordinarily serve to keep the booster calm, but sometimes the situation gets out of hand, especially if the booster has been drinking or is doped.

There was Anita, for instance. Anita was 27 and good-looking. She was an alcoholic and a weird one. Anita drank nothing but perfume, and not cheap stuff either. Her shoplifting specialty was stealing only the best in cloth coats. But, before she could screw up her courage to steal the expensive coats, she had to get charged up with expensive perfume. She would buy the perfume, drink the whole bottle, and then go foraging for a coat. Anita was well known around town, not so much by sight as by smell. Also she was known because whenever she was caught, which was frequently, her perfume jag changed her from a pretty, well-dressed girl, into a raging hell cat, so much so that the police had to be called in to subdue her.

The inconspicuous apprehension of shoplifters has been developed because the stores demand it. Such things as Anita's tantrums, however unavoidable, may drive people from the store never to come back. Moreover, there is the chance of costly litigation because of a fight, and there is always the nightmare of false arrest. Even a guilty person may sue and recover for mental anguish and loss of reputation occasioned by his arrest, if the crime is a misdemeanor—that is, a theft under \$100. Guilt in such cases apparently is not admissible as evidence.

Sometimes the detective can't resist a little horseplay with the booster. There was the man who stole the alarm clock and put it in the pocket of his overcoat. The detective saw him, took an alarm clock from the counter, wound it, set it to ring in a few minutes and put it in his own pocket. He then followed the thief around and stood beside him wherever he stopped. Presently the detective's alarm clock let go with a great clamor. The thief grabbed frantically for the stolen clock in his pocket, to shut it off, and when he pulled it out was apprehended with the goods.

A good detective never takes chances on false ar-

rest. He waits until the theft is certain. A man shopping for wallets, for instance, may pocket one absently and walk out with it. I follow him. If he goes on without concern the chances are that he is innocent, and will return the item anyway. If, however, the man should take the wallet out of his pocket, pull off the price tag and the stock number, an apprehension seems in order.

Or it may be a woman with a handbag. I followed one out of the store the other day and down the street for three blocks, until she started to board a bus. She was carrying her own handbag on her arm along with one of the store's. As she was about to step on the bus she became aware of the store's bag. She turned ashen and hurried back. As inconspicuously as possible she put the bag on the counter and fled. She didn't know I had seen her.

Detectives are warier, perhaps, in their dealings with children. There are more teen-agers in the game today than ever before. Some of them are tough and startling, and most of them are clever. Their favorite act is to scream and weep if the detective lays a hand on them. This can be embarrassing, if not downright dangerous. Not long ago a male detective was nearly mobbed by aroused customers as he was taking a screaming boy to the protection office. The people thought the detective was abusing the child.

Once I was the center of a terrific hullabaloo when I apprehended a woman shoplifter after she had left the store. Her two small children grabbed me around the legs, screaming, "Let my mother alone! Let my mother alone!" I had to drag them along as I took the woman back to the store. She had trained them to do that.

It is the usual policy to release children—unless they are hardened offenders—in the custody of their parents or the Juvenile Aid Society. This keeps their names off the police records.

Since stores are lenient with charge accounts, it was possible for one woman to steal at least \$15,000 over a period of ten years before she was caught. Anybody can charge at a department store if the amount is below \$10. You need no identification. There is no checking to see if you have an account, for it would be time-consuming and expensive. So the policy is to take the charge and the chance.

Imposters sometimes resort to such dodges as stealing salesbooks and making out slips themselves, or of obtaining quantities of Blue Cross and Social Security cards and faking identification in order to charge large amounts, but mostly they simply take advantage of the store's leniency.

The woman who got away with \$15,000 in merchandise began her career one day when she asked to have an item charged to her account and discovered that she needed no identification. Next to her was a woman who also charged something and needed no identification; and our first woman made mental note of the name. A day or so later she came back, used the other woman's name and got away with it. She was off. Before she was through she had every department store in New York after her.

When they finally caught up with her, a few months ago, even the detectives were surprised. She was a middle-aged, ordinary sort of person, with five children and several grandchildren. She came of a good family, lives comfortably, and had no police record. She never sold any of the items she stole; she gave them away to friends and relatives and especially to her grandchildren. She loved to give, but couldn't afford to give what she wanted to give. So she stole. It might be said that the woman was generous to a fault.

One oddity of my work is that things run in cycles. Right now there are a great many kids; next year it may be elderly women. And it is a strange fact that the cycles exist at the same time at all stores; if one store reports a run of wealthy young married women, all stores will report the same. There are cycles in things stolen, too, although lingerie and small costume stuff always are leaders. But here the cycle is easier to explain: bathing suits and sporting goods are stolen in spring and summer; toys, compacts, cigarette cases are popular in December. On Mondays and rainy days, shoplifting is heavy.

Why do people steal? The professional steals for obvious reasons; so do the desperately needy—whether for food or narcotics. And there is the avaricious person who can afford to buy but who wants to get something for nothing. There is the person of no moral stamina who steals to keep up with the Joneses. Many expectant mothers steal for their coming children. And I know of brides-to-be who have stolen things they could not afford to buy for their trousseaux.


But beyond these is the great mass of people who steal for strange reasons, or no reason at all.

Doctors, lawyers, teachers, members of the clergy, the wives of diplomats, prominent civic women—all these are in this category. They steal, but they cannot explain their thefts.

There are psychiatric reasons for stealing. And some stores actually retain psychiatrists to try to rehabilitate those they believe are capable of being helped. An example is a young woman who went home every night and showed her husband something she had stolen. The husband laughed, didn't take her seriously. She had stolen because she thought he was inattentive and she wanted him to notice her. She achieved her purpose when she was arrested. Now she is under the care of the psychiatrist recommended by the store.

Shoplifting frequently accompanies turmoil of the emotions. Women who have lost babies, women whose husbands are unfaithful, homosexuals, the maladjusted, the neurotic, the unhappy—these frequently find themselves in the protection offices after stealing, bewildered and aghast at what they have done.

The avaricious shoplifter I despise; for all the others—professional, degraded, neurotic, maladjusted, unhappy, weak—I have great sympathy. Only a thin line divides them from me and from the rest of so-called normal humanity. Perhaps, I keep telling myself, conditions weren't right for the rest of us to steal. It might have been different if they had been. •



FICTION BONUS

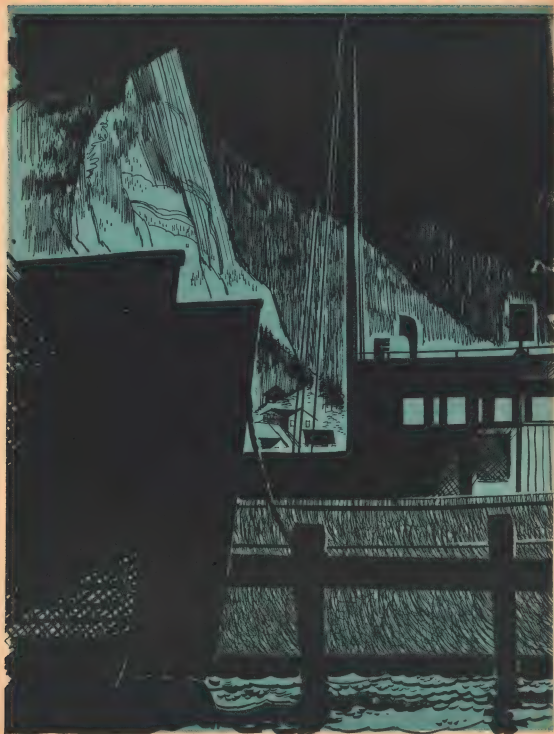
Once again, the thousands of *Bluebook* readers who go for lusty, all-male fiction in preference to any other kind of reading are the lucky ones this month. As we've done once or twice in the past, we now present two big adventure novels in place of our customary one. And, as before, the variety is such as to appeal to virtually any lover of solid, fast-paced reading for men.

Beginning on the next page is "Boy From Nowhere," another exciting mystery of the Northwest by an expert in the field, John Rhodes Sturdy. If you like excitement, with a touch of romance and a finish that won't let you stop reading until the final paragraph, then this one's for you.

And if you go for foreign intrigue, for the exotic glamor of the Orient, then don't fail to read "South of the Clouds," by James Merriam Moore, which begins on page 112. A thrilling story of an American caught behind the lines of battle in the fierce struggle for control of China, you'll tingle through every page of this breath-taking action-thriller.

And, as always, they're both complete in this issue!

The Editors



Boy from Nowhere

He wouldn't talk, wouldn't
say where he'd come from.
But you didn't have
to hear his voice to know
the sheer terror that
hid behind his dark eyes.

By John Rhodes Sturdy

■ Craig had given the boat's engine a needed quart of oil and was almost ready to cast off from the ramshackle landing when he saw Potter coming down the path, and so he stood on the forward deck of the cruiser and waited.

Potter was a fat man, and the tails of a faded tan shirt were flapping energetically around his middle, outside his pants, as he bounced and scrambled over the rocky trail. Even



from this distance it was a good bet, thought Craig, that he would be puffing and perspiring from the effort, and very likely uttering a choice selection of curses.

The descent was made more difficult by the fact that the stout man had a child by the hand—a boy, an Indian boy, Craig realized—who was not being too co-operative about following the leader.

Potter was shouting, "Dawson! Hey, Dawson!" almost frantically, and Craig raised a hand to indicate that he had seen him and was waiting.

Craig's boat—the 40-foot *Arbutus* of the forestry service—lay at a small, half-broken wharf that belonged to Potter. It was at the head of a narrow inlet where thick timber came almost to the water's edge, the only hint of habitation along miles of this stretch of northern coast.

The two figures reached the wharf, and Craig had been right; the fat man was sweating profusely and breathing hard. Craig looked curiously at the Indian boy. He was about 8 or 9 years of age; a short, moon-faced boy with dark skin and black eyes that were trying, with the background of generations, to be expressionless and unattractable, but still were too young to hide completely the fright behind them. He was wearing jeans and an old sweater.

"Hello, Potter," Craig said, smiling. "I was up at your place, but found nobody home."

"We were across the inlet. I saw you come in and hurried back."

"I left you some tobacco."

"Thanks. Thanks very much, Dawson."

"I'd stay for a while, but the tide's against me. Any mail I can take out for you?"

The fat man shook his head. "No mail," he said. "But will you take this kid?"

Craig stared at him in surprise and then looked down at the Indian boy. "Where is he from?"

Potter was slowly regaining his breath. "That's it. I don't know. I found him in the bush, half-starved, and took him home. He won't tell me anything about himself, except that he was on a boat. He must have landed from a boat, or else how did he turn up on this part of the coast? But that's all I could get out of him. Believe me, Dawson, I've been down on my knees trying to coax him to talk."

Craig smiled at the thought of Potter on his knees. He jumped from the deck to the wharf and advanced toward the boy with an encouraging nod. "What's your name, son?" he asked gently.

"David," the boy said.

"Well, that's fine. And where do you come from?"

The dark lips tightened. Craig waited. Then he said: "You must tell me. Your people will be worried. You must tell me where you're from, and how you got here."

The child turned and stared fixedly at the lettering on the bow of the *Arbutus*.

"That's what I've been getting," Potter said. "Oh, he'll be gabby about all kinds of things, except anything that's important. I don't have a radio, so I don't know if a kid of his description has been reported lost. And he's either lost, or he ran away. I expect the best thing to do is hand him into the Indian Agency. Will you take him to Stone Harbor?"

Craig straightened and looked at Potter. "I hadn't planned on Stone Harbor," he said. "I'm on a week's patrol. This is the fire season and I have a lot of territory to cover. And I'm alone this trip."

He glanced again toward the boy. "Anyway," he added, "his people will be turning up to look for him."

"I found him last Friday," Potter said.

Craig's head jerked around toward the fat man. Last Friday was three days ago. "Did you search the beach?"

"I went as far as I could. I had no help from our young friend here. And I found nothing." The fat man shuffled his feet. "I've no way of taking the boy out of here, you know. And it may be a month before the mission boat comes by. Tell the truth, Dawson, I don't know how to cope with a child."

And Craig was thinking: Do I? Together for a week in a boat the size of the *Arbutus*, which in herself was almost too much for one man to handle. How could he keep an eye on the boy every minute? What if the youngster fell overboard? What if...

But, in a way, Potter was right. The fat man lived alone in a wilderness. You often found his type on the northern coast; lonely men who had retired into their own little world, and almost lost contact.

Another boat might not enter this inlet for many weeks. And surely somewhere, someone must be vitally concerned about the fate of this boy.

Craig made up his mind. "Get aboard, son," he said. And when the boy hesitated, the black eyes narrowing, he repeated more sternly: "Get aboard, now."

Perhaps, for an instant, the little Indian had intended to run. But Potter's stout figure was blocking the exit from the narrow wharf, and Craig

was very close to him. Slowly the boy walked to the stern of the vessel and climbed aboard.

Craig finished untying the lines.

"I hope," said Potter, "that you have better luck with him than I did. Thanks again for the tobacco, Dawson. I'll pay you next trip."

They shook hands. Craig had been bringing the fat man tobacco for a long time, and payment "next trip" had never materialized. And never had been expected. There were one or two little things you could do to make a lonely man's life a bit more pleasant. Sometimes you knew exactly how a lonely man felt.

Craig went aboard, and motioned to the Indian boy to join him in the small wheelhouse. There were a couple of stools there; he indicated one of them, and the youngster climbed up on it as the engine came to life. Craig waved to the fat figure on the wharf, as he swung the wheel over and the *Arbutus* pointed her nose down the inlet.

They headed for the open sea, between the high mountains of spruce, skirting a small island that guarded the entrance to the inlet and meeting the swell with a lift that soon settled into a slow, easy roll.

Craig poured a cigarette and lit it. "Well, here we are, David," he said.

He turned and was surprised to see a smile on the round face.

"You know my name."

"Well, you told me. Part of it, that is. What comes after the David?"

"David Goliath Capilano."

"That's quite a name," Craig said. "And where do you live, David Goliath?"

The smile disappeared as suddenly as it had come—as though the boy had made a mistake and now regretted it—and there was silence except for the chug of the engine and the slap of water against the boat's hull.

"You know," said Craig, "we won't get very far being shipmates if we don't know more about each other. Now, for instance, my name's Craig Dawson. I'm a Forestry patrol officer, and this is my boat. I cruise up and down this coast, watching the timber and looking out for fires."

He realized he had caught the boy's interest. "All alone?"

"Well, sometimes. And sometimes I have an assistant—another man. But he's not with me this trip."

"No woman?"

"Well, no." Craig forced back a smile. "This isn't the sort of job that ladies take to."

"But you have a lady back home? A wife, I guess."

"Not even a wife," Craig admitted, and then he found the boy looking at him strangely, as though there were

something wrong about a man who did not have a wife. Which might be true, at that. Packed away in a drawer in the main cabin, somewhere, was the picture of a girl who had almost become Mrs. Dawson. Only—and he remembered very clearly—she had not been willing to take on the boat, and the long absences, and the danger that was often present on the sea and in the woods. She hadn't minded the Forestry Service, but she had wanted a commissioner, in an office with a telephone, who would be home for dinner.

PERHAPS she had weighed the chances against Craig Dawson ever becoming a commissioner. Or perhaps any waiting had been outside of her plans.

It was sometimes easy to forget that; it was easy, on these long, lonely cruises up the North Pacific coast, to think sentimentally of her and believe that she would always be there in Seattle, and that she would change her mind some day. Her picture was not vaguely somewhere in a drawer in the main cabin. He knew exactly where it was.

He realized that several moments had passed since he had spoken to the boy. He had been staring at the sea ahead, at the cloud banks against the horizon, and had been creating images in his mind, as he often did when he was alone. He reminded himself now that he was not alone; that he had the company of a little Indian wai, about whom he knew exactly nothing, except that his name was David Goliath Capilano.

"Speaking of ladies, David," he said.

"Where is your mother?"

"I haven't got a mother."

"You live with relatives?"

"Sometimes."

"Where?"

The round, dark face became impassive.

"Look, David, you're not playing fair with me. Remember what I said about shipmates? I've told you about myself; now it's your turn."

"I like boats," the boy said abruptly. "My father's on a boat."

"A fish-boat? Is your father a fisherman?"

"Oh, no, my father's in a big boat." The face became almost animated. "A battleship. He's a sailor. My uncle has a picture of him, in his uniform, and my uncle says my father will come home when the Navy don't need him any more."

Craig said: "I expect you'll be very glad to see him when he gets home." And then casually: "Where would that be—home, I mean?"

But he got absolutely nowhere. The child's bland stubbornness exasperated him, and he had an idea that

it was fatal to show exasperation with children.

"You know, David," he said eventually, "if you've run away, sooner or later people will find you. No one can run away forever. . . ."

Then abruptly the words died on his lips because he had noticed the youngster's eyes, and had seen in them something close to real terror.

He did not continue. He thought he had discovered two things; that the boy had deliberately run away, and that he was terrified of being discovered. Instead he said: "Well, anyway, David, I have to take you somewhere. Where would you like to go?"

"I'd like to stay here." The words were faltering at first, then grew more confident. "I like this boat. I like you. You're like my father is. Were you in the Navy?"

"Once," Craig admitted.

"I'll be in the Navy, too." David nodded his head. "I'll stay with you, now. I'll wash the boat, and paint." He suddenly looked appealingly at Craig. "Could I have a glass of water?"

"Would milk suit you better?"

"Gee, sure!"

Craig throttled down the engine. He lifted the stool with the Indian boy still sitting on it and placed it behind the wheel. He showed David the compass and said: "You keep the pointer on that line and sail the ship for me."

He could see pride and excitement in the round face as the boy grasped the handles of the wheel. Then Craig went below, behind the wheelhouse, to the tiny galley where he opened a can of evaporated milk and mixed half a glassful with water. He hesitated, then lit the stove and dumped a can of baked beans into a saucepan. When he returned to the wheelhouse he was carrying the glass of milk and a heaping plateful of hot beans.

The boat was not too far off course when Craig took over, and he pulled up another stool behind the wheel and watched David as the boy gulped the milk and ate the beans with astonishing rapidity. He was not a bad-looking youngster. There was intelligence in his dark eyes, and his face, although round and a little chubby, would have strong lines when he grew older.

What to do with him? Well, as Potter had suggested, there was an Indian Agency at Stone Harbor, but that was far off the track of the *Arbutus*, and there would be difficult questions to answer if he deviated much from his present patrol. On big Garabaldi Island, to the northwest, there was Retreat Inlet, a logging center and an Indian village, and if he kept the boat running all night he would reach

there sometime in the early morning. It was either that, or have the boy with him until the patrol was completed.

He glanced at his watch and switched on the radio. He caught the main portion of a news broadcast out of Prince Rupert, but there was no mention of a lost child. He listened anyway, to what was happening in a crowded world, and when he turned off the set and glanced toward the other stool, the boy was gone.

Craig felt a sharp stab of fear. He got off the stool, knocking it over in his haste, and looked down into the main cabin hatch. The cabin was deserted, and turning, he wrenched open the wheelhouse door on the starboard side. His eyes searched the deck, fore and aft, and suddenly he held his breath.

In the stern, with his head and shoulders just reaching the top of the gunwale, a small figure was trying to lean over the side.

Slowly Craig let out his breath.

David Goliath was being seasick.

Craig returned to the wheel and pulled the boat back on her course. He was surprised at the hard pounding of his heart, and he realized that he had been badly frightened.

That was no good, of course. If, every time the child moved out of his sight, he was going to have an attack of fright, then he had better get rid of his passenger as soon as possible.

He turned as the boy's face appeared in the wheelhouse doorway, and he felt a sudden wave of compassion for the little David Goliath when he saw the grayish tinge to the dark cheeks and the colorless lips.

"I guess," said the boy unhappily,

"I won't be much good for the Navy."

"Admirals get seasick," Craig said.

"Admirals get the sickest of all."

He caught the ghost of a smile.

"Like to lie down? You can use the starboard bunk."

"No, I'd like to stay with you. I'm sorry about the beans."

CRAIG smiled and put his arm around the boy. Suddenly he felt the small shoulders tremble, and he glanced down sharply, wondering if his gesture had frightened the boy. But it was not that. He looked into the black eyes and read there something that surprised and bothered him. It was as though the boy were clinging to him; had trembled, not with fright, but from relief. It was as though the boy were saying: "I feel safe now."

Craig's arm tightened unconsciously. There was something troubling this youngster; something that he was afraid to talk about, or could not talk about. Perhaps, when the time came to put him ashore, he would tell. It

was obvious that he could not be hurried or forced. It was obvious, too, that he was in desperate need of companionship and the feeling, even the illusion, of safety.

"You steer," said Craig. "You be the captain again and I'll stand by."

The boy fought back an attack of nausea. But he scrambled up on the stool that Craig righted for him, and concentrated on the business of steering the boat.

Only once did he deviate. As though remembering something, he turned briefly and looked at Craig. "You should have a wife," he said.

Craig grinned. "You're rather young," he said, "to be hepped on the subject of wives."

"It is lonely for a man without a wife," the boy said seriously. "That's what my uncle says. He says my father would be home sooner if he had a wife. That fat man, Mr. Potter, is very lonely. He just sits all day by the window and smokes his pipe, and is a very sad man. By gosh, you don't want to be like him."

"No," Craig conceded. "I don't want to be like him."

"It's all right for little boys to be lonely, but not when you grow up."

"You'd better watch that compass, Captain," Craig said.

It was like a hundred other nights on the northern coast. The darkness came in suddenly, dropping like a blanket on the sea, and the forested outline of the shore was there one minute and, it almost seemed, gone the next.

The small light in the wheelhouse accentuated the feeling of isolation, shining down on Craig and the boy and separating them from the blackness outside. And with the coming of night, there was silence.

CRAIG had taken over the wheel again. He had prepared a cup of hot milk for David. When he saw that the drink was nearly finished, Craig said: "I think you'd better turn in, David. The starboard bunk is made up. Just tuck yourself under the covers and get some sleep."

"Don't you sleep?"

"Not until we tie up somewhere."

"Where are we going?"

"I haven't decided."

The boy's forehead looked moist. He started to say something, then changed his mind and drank the last of the milk. "Well, good night, sir," he said.

"Good night, David."

There was something appealing, and a little pitiful, too, about the tiny figure descending by the hatch into the main cabin. Craig had made up his mind. If they held this course, and the weather stayed calm, Retreat Inlet would be showing up sometime

in the early morning, and someone there could be found to look after the child. Probably the Indians would be able to identify him, would know his name—if David Goliath Capilano was his real name—because the coastal tribes always knew one another's business.

It meant the complete loss of a night's sleep, but that was better than shouldering the responsibility of the boy for any longer time.

Craig lit a cigarette, switched off the lamp for greater visibility, and settled back to ride out the night. Funny thing, he kept remembering what the boy had said about a wife, or the lack of one. Still, to be honest, you could not blame the girl in Seattle for rebelling against this kind of thing; the prospect of a husband who spent half his time prowling lonely bays and inlets in a boat, and who could not take her dancing on Saturday night—or celebrate their wedding anniversary—because he was chasing a forest fire somewhere, as the poets had expressed it, back of beyond.

It was hours later, and he had kept awake by softly humming to himself and almost continually smoking cigarettes, when he thought he heard a moan.

It did not come from the rigging, or from the sea. He waited, wondering if he had been mistaken, trying to put in the background the steady chug of the engine and the water slipping past the hull.

Then he heard it again, and he stiffened. He was certain of it this time. It was the tortured moan of a child in pain, or terror. And it was repeated, and followed by a voice crying out in panic.

He got off his stool, suddenly white-faced, and throttled down the engine until it was almost on the point of stopping. Then he locked the wheel on what he felt was a safe course.

He went below, stumbling in the darkness of the cabin. The boy's moaning was close to him as he felt for the light switch, and when the light came on and he turned his eyes toward the starboard bunk, he was shocked by what he saw.

The little Indian was lying in his bunk, and had kicked off almost all the covers. His round face was bathed in sweat and his teeth were chattering. Reddened and tear-stained eyes blinked vacantly at the deckhead above him. Suddenly he cried out again and his whole body jerked.

Craig sat down quickly on the edge of the bunk, putting out his hands to hold the boy. The eyes stopped blinking and stared up at him, and stark terror showed in them. The boy tried to get away, to flatten himself against the bulkhead.

Then perhaps at last he recognized Craig. He raised his shoulders and flung himself into the man's arms, trembling violently.

Craig held the boy close to his chest, and when the small hands crept up around his neck, they were cold as ice.

"It's all right, David," Craig whispered softly. "Whatever it is, don't be frightened, it's all right."

This was no attack of seasickness. He had seen men so deathly seasick that they were weak, limp rags. But not like this.

The boy still clung to him, and he stroked the thick, black hair.

"Don't take me back!" he heard the boy's muffled sob.

"Back where, David?"

"He'll find me. He tried to kill me, too!"

"He killed somebody?"

But there was no reply to the question; only a tightening of the arms around his neck.

Craig spoke in a soft voice. "Who was the man? Why would he try to kill you?"

It was difficult to catch the boy's almost whispered words. "He will think I'm dead in the woods. If I go back, he will know I'm alive and find me."

"Who?" Craig repeated.

But the boy had lost all powers of speech. He went limp, and for a moment Craig was frightened. He bent back the child's head and looked into the half-closed eyes, at the same time thrusting his hand inside the sweater against the small chest. The boy was breathing, but with difficulty, and Craig felt his body trembling again.

He eased David gently back on the bunk and gathered up the covers from the deck and arranged them around the boy. Then he rose and went to the sink and pumped a glass of water, and in the medicine box that he carried aboard he found a bottle of aspirin and shook out one of the pills. He went back and, raising the boy's head, made him take the pill and drink some of the water.

David tried to speak, but Craig said: "Not now. Don't say anything more. Just keep bundled up and try to sleep."

A VIOLENT jar against the hull brought him to his feet. It had been a heavy crash, rocking the boat, and he was staggering when he flung himself toward the hatch and scrambled up into the wheelhouse.

For a moment he thought they had grounded, but his better judgment told him that was almost impossible; he knew his position too well for that. He could see nothing through the wheelhouse windows, and his hand went out to the switch that controlled the searchlight up top.

He maneuvered the sharp beam of

light in an arc around the boat, and then he kept the light steady as it caught and held a shape in the water. It was a giant log, a floating tree that still wore some of its branches, and in a moment it disappeared in the darkness astern.

He tested the wheel and the helm responded easily to his touch. But when he revved up the engine he suddenly groaned, because he knew instantly that the prop had been damaged, more than likely by a branch that had been riding underwater when the tree had struck the hull.

The propeller was not completely ruined. But either he had a bent shaft or a broken blade, because the engine, running at full speed when he tried it, gave him only a small increase in thrust.

He throttled down again, afraid he would do further damage. And he drew the back of his hand across his forehead because he suddenly realized that he was sweating. He was a long way from Retreat Inlet, with a sick boy, and there was nothing he could do.

Once more he shone the searchlight in an arc, across the empty waters, checked his compass and went below.

The boy had kicked off the covers again and Craig rearranged the blankets. David's eyes were closed, and now Craig put out his hand and touched the child's forehead. The contact was like a sudden shock to his nerves. The perspiration had almost disappeared, and the skin was turning hot and dry. It was the beginning of fever.

Craig tore a blanket from the port bunk and put it over the others on the boy. Perhaps the aspirin would help. Then he straightened, looking down at the face half-buried in the blankets, and he felt sick and helpless.

After a time he went back to the wheelhouse, knowing that he could not remain with the child, and he was praying.

The long night passed, and out of it he developed a fierceness in his soul that would have surprised him if he had been able to recognize it. The practical things he did—and he did not even know if they were right—like feeding the boy water and managing somehow to get him to swallow more aspirin—were performed calmly and with gentleness.

But, inside, his emotions were seething. At the times when he held the boy in his arms, his muscles were taut and his vision misted. The utter dependency of the child upon him and the trust he could see in the fevered dark eyes, drove him alternately from a feeling of hopelessness to a deep, terrible fury against the unknown man who had been the cause of all this.

When dawn broke along the coast, and he could see the outline of the shore, he was half-dazed. He felt strange, and he put his hands to his face and pressed the tips of his fingers into his tired sore eyes, and tried to bring his thoughts into focus.

He was still a long way from Retreat Inlet. The boat could make little more than two or three knots, and it would be late in the morning, or afternoon, before he would reach the harbor.

He had watched the boy all through the night, moving back and forth between the wheelhouse and the cabin. There was no sign yet of any abatement in the fever, and he was desperate.

Almost from the first break of dawn he had tried to contact Retreat Inlet on the radio-telephone he carried in the wheelhouse. There was a fisheries station at the Inlet, and he often switched onto that wave length when he was cruising in the area, to pick up any messages that might be transmitted from his own headquarters.

The sun was well up when he did make contact. He was still hugging the coast, in a quiet sea, and when at last he got through he could scarcely recognize his own voice.

"Who is that?" Retreat Inlet kept repeating. "Who is that?"

"Arbutus. Craig Dawson speaking."

"Craig? This is Fisheries—Rutherford."

"Can you hear me?"

"Not very well. Is that you, Craig?"

"Yes, Craig! Is there a doctor at the Inlet?"

The speaker rumbled and whined, and he cursed the interference. Then the voice came through again. "Are you in trouble, Craig?"

"Not me. I've got a very sick passenger. A boy."

"Are you coming in?"

"My prop's damaged. I can't make any speed. If there's a doctor there, can you get him to speak to me? He may be able to tell me what to do; how to treat the boy until I reach there."

"There's no doctor here today."

Craig shook his head helplessly. He suddenly forgot he was talking to someone. And then the voice babbled at his ears insistently, until he recognized the words.

"You say your passenger is very sick?"

"Yes."

"What's your position?"

"I'm almost off the mouth of Princess Sound. I'll be altering for the island in about five minutes."

"Is it calm there?"

"Like a millpond now."

"Look, Craig—"

"Yes."

"Maybe I've got something. There's a public health nurse flying up this morning from Stone Harbor. I'll try to contact Stone Harbor before the pilot takes off, and see if he'll fly over your position and transfer the nurse. Give me a course and speed from the mouth of Princess Sound."



"Not in soapy water captains don't go down with their ships!"

Craig thought quickly. "North-northwest about three knots," he said, and he heard the words repeated.

"All right, Craig, you keep going. I'll do my best."

The contact was broken, and Craig sat down heavily on the stool behind the wheel. After a time he thought: I'll have to make some coffee, I'll have to get some eggs or something into me.

He was not tired from lack of sleep, not yet. The weakness that he felt coming over him now was the result of fear and anxiety, of trying to watch over the boy and at the same time handle the crippled boat.

He listened to the hard, troubled breathing of young David before he went into the tiny galley and put on coffee and boiled a couple of eggs. At times in the night he had remembered the almost incoherent sentences the boy had cried out to him in that first spasm of fever and terror. A man had killed someone; had attempted to shoot the boy. What man? Why and where?

The answers would have to wait. A nurse was coming, perhaps. He wondered what kind of a nurse; the type that went around looking at children's teeth and suggesting they see the dentist; that gave lectures on sanitation and what to do in case of chicken pox?

He tried to get a little more speed out of the lumbering *Arbutus*. He could eat only one of the eggs, but he drank a lot of the coffee, and the cigarettes that followed tasted a little better, although his tongue was rough and he felt half sick.

A southerly breeze pushing up at the stern helped the boat a little, but he did not like it because the waters were beginning to ripple, to form into embryo waves, and he was thinking of the plane.

When he heard the purr, far to the south, he felt himself relax slightly, and he opened the wheelhouse door and looked up at the sky.

The plane approached at a fairly low altitude, a small float craft, with the markings of Northern Air Taxi on its tail, and the pilot lost no time in getting down on the water. He roared to a stop within a few yards of the *Arbutus*, which now had the way off her, and then taxied across the choppy water until Craig, who was on deck now, could grab a tip of the wing.

The plane's door opened and he heard a feminine voice say: "Thanks very much, Joe. This will be fine." A figure dressed in blue stepped out of the plane and onto the float nearest the *Arbutus* and Craig was conscious of a head of dark hair and a small face, and the glimpse of trim legs above a pair of semi-flying boots, and

then the voice was saying: "Please take this," and he was handed a small black bag.

He tried to help the girl over the side, but she was evidently quite capable of making the transfer without his assistance. When she reached the deck she turned quickly and called: "Fine, Joe," and from the aircraft a man shouted: "I'll stand by."

The nurse looked at Craig. He had a brief impression that she was quite pretty and rather small and neat, and she said crisply: "Thanks, I'll take this now," and relieved him of the bag. "Where is the patient?"

He indicated the cabin and she left him without another word. He stood outside the door of the wheelhouse and watched the plane as it drifted a few yards away, and raised his arm in greeting when he saw the pilot wave to him.

He was still standing there when she reappeared. She had removed her coat and was dressed in a skirt and blouse and she cupped her hands and shouted towards the plane: "You can take off, Joe; I'll stay aboard. We'll go into Retreat Inlet."

Craig saw the pilot wave again. He listened to the aircraft's engine rev up, and watched the tiny plane swing into the wind and then roar away to a take-off.

The girl had gone below again. He went into the wheelhouse and started up the boat's engine and slowly came around to his course. After a time the waiting made him jittery, and he kept glancing around at the hatch leading into the main cabin. When at last the nurse climbed into the wheelhouse, his throat was a little tight.

"How is he?" Craig asked. She walked to the forward window and looked out across the sea. Her profile was sharp.

"He's not very good," she said. "He's running a high fever, isn't he?"

"He was. It's beginning to break. Did you give him anything?"

"Aspirin and water. I didn't know what else to do."

"Well, that was sensible. He'll be all right—physically. There isn't anything in his physical condition that rest and quiet won't cure. He's falling asleep now."

Craig tried to find a cigarette in his pocket. For the last few moments he had been waiting to hear her say: The boy is seriously ill. The boy is dying. That had been in the back of his mind, like a cloud threatening to burst. Now his relief came in the form of a nervous little half-laugh.

She turned quickly toward him, her lips thin. "He's ill because he's terrified. What have you done to him?"

Her small pretty face became blurred in front of his misty eyes. The aftermath of the night's ordeal suddenly became too much for him, and he could feel his hands tighten on the wheel and his chest go taut and his teeth clench.

"God damn it!" he almost shouted at her. "What have I done to him! I found him on the coast. I took him aboard. He got sick, and I didn't know what to do, and I asked for a doctor and they sent you. Well, do what you're trained to do—nurse him. Don't ask me damn fool stupid questions."

And then, just as suddenly, the anger went out of him, completely. He slumped on the stool behind the wheel and tried to look out to sea, tried to believe that any second now he would see Garibaldi Island and Retreat Inlet looming up ahead on the horizon. The thought came from sheer desperation, because he knew well enough that land was still far beyond sight.

He turned and saw the girl's face: her wide, shocked eyes and the flush of red in her cheeks, and he said: "Forgive me for screaming at you."

"Perhaps I deserved it," she said slowly. "How long has the boy been with you?"

"Since yesterday." "You haven't had any sleep."

"It's not important."

"I'm sorry," she said. "I'm really and truly sorry. You've done a lot for the boy; perhaps saved his life. But he is terrified. I saw it as soon as I came aboard. I would say his fever is the result of terror and exhaustion. He's been through some terrible experience, hasn't he? Can you tell me about it?"

He told her what he knew, and how the boy had cried out in his half-delirium during the night. She listened silently and thoughtfully, and then she asked: "Do you think he's been a witness to murder?"

"I think it sounds like it."

He saw her shudder a little. Then she went below, but was back in two or three minutes. "He's sleeping now," she announced quietly. "I noticed you have a galley. Can I make you some coffee? Something to eat, perhaps."

"There's a pot of coffee on the stove. I've had breakfast. How about you?"

"I ate at Stone Harbor, thanks."

She left him again and returned with two cups of coffee. "That's quite an efficient little kitchen," she said, and when he suddenly chuckled, asked: "Have I said something funny?"

"No—I was just thinking." He was thinking that she was the first woman who had ever used the galley. He

was thinking of what young David had said about a woman.

"What do you plan to do with the boy?"

"I don't know. If he would talk to me, perhaps I'd know the answer to that."

"I don't think there will be any permanent answer until the cause of his fear is removed."

"Yes," said Craig, "I've been thinking of that, too."

"What's your name?"

He told her, and she told him that hers was Joan Chapman. She was new to this part of the coast, but she had worked with Indians before, in the interior, and she liked her job; although sometimes, she admitted, loneliness got the upper hand of her.

"That's a regional disease," Craig said.

"Loneliness? I suppose it is. And I suppose, eventually, you build up an immunity to it."

"Then you become like Potter—you know, the man who found young David. There are a lot of Potters up here."

"Any Miss Potters?" she asked.

He turned and saw that she was smiling. She had an attractive, gay smile that was a surprising contrast to the impression of crispness and efficiency he had received when she had first come aboard.

"I haven't run across any," he said.

"That's a relief. I only have a year in this district. I'd like to leave as I came in."

"As Miss Chapman?"

"Well," she said, "that's my name."

CRAIG discovered they were talking about themselves most of the time as the *Arbutus* limped toward Garabaldi Island. Perhaps there was nothing much else to talk about, or perhaps they both felt that it was an easy way to keep their minds, for a time, off the Indian boy. She told him she had been born in California, and had nursed in a San Francisco hospital for a while, and had been interested in public health and preventive medicine even before she had branched out into the field. She made her headquarters at Stone Harbor, and why didn't Craig come in there once in a while? They had a good crowd there, and had hacked a nine-hole golf course out of the wilderness. Joe Shanks was the president—that was Joe who piloted the Northern Air Taxis plane—and Joe was a great deal of fun; there was certainly no chance of Joe ever becoming a Potter.

To Craig, for some reason, Joe Shanks sounded pretty formidable.

Later she went below to sit with David, and he was calculating his mileage when he became conscious that she was looking at him from the

hatch. For an instant her expression frightened him. Her eyes were serious and concerned and he thought that the boy might have had a relapse.

But she said: "He wants to see you. I'll take the wheel."

He nodded, and gave her the course. Then he went into the main cabin and saw David lying on the starboard bunk, the covers neatly arranged over him, his head resting on a couple of pillows.

Craig said: "Hello, son."

He sat down on the edge of the bunk and smiled at the black eyes which were concentrating almost fiercely on his own. He felt the small forehead and it was warm but moist, and he asked: "Feeling better?"

"Yes, sir."

"The lady knew what to do—she's a nurse."

"Yes, sir."

"Well, everything will be all right now."

"The eyes held him. "Where are we going?"

"We're heading for Retreat Inlet. We have a damaged propeller and we can't make much speed..."

He broke off, because the boy had raised his head and his lips were trembling.

"Is Retreat Inlet where you live, David?"

For a moment there was stubborn silence from the boy. Then slowly he nodded. "Yes," he murmured. "Sometimes I live there. Sometimes any place."

"Do you trust me, David?"

"Yes, sir."

"Do you know that I won't let anyone harm you—anyone at all?"

"Yes."

"Then I want you to tell me everything that happened to you."

The lips trembled again, but the boy was still looking into Craig's eyes. "I went on a boat," he said, speaking almost inaudibly. "Matthew Jim's boat."

"An Indian?" Craig asked.

The boy nodded. "He had a fish-boat. Sometimes I go with him. Sometimes with other men. I wash dishes, clean fish, and they give me money. This time Matthew Jim is going to Stone Harbor and tells me I can go, too, because he will be alone coming back."

"You left from Retreat Inlet?"

"Yes, sir. But first we go to a little wharf near the village, that no one hardly ever uses and there we pick up another man. Matthew Jim and him know each other, but I've never seen this man before. His name is Pete, a white man."

"Pete who?"

The boy shook his head slowly. "I don't know. That's all I hear Matthew Jim call him—just Pete. And so

we leave, and that afternoon the wind is pretty bad and Matthew Jim says we will go into a cove and spend the night there. That was on the mainland, you see, and so he put down the anchor and then the other man says he has a bottle in his bag and they drink a lot together."

The boy lay back and stared up at the deckhead, exhausted, or too frightened to go on. Craig waited, and slowly David began to talk again slowly.

"They were awful drunk. In the cabin. And there was a lot of talk about who made the most money, loggers or fishermen, and Matthew Jim says fishermen make the most and he has seven hundred dollars that he is taking to the bank at Stone Harbor. I remember him laughing like crazy and saying his wife don't know about that money or his bank in Stone Harbor, either, and the other man tells him that's a lot of money to be carrying around, and Matthew Jim says no one will take it from him because he has a gun, and he gets it out and puts it on the table—a big revolver.

"THEY drink a lot more until the bottle is empty, and then the man says the tide is low and let's dig clams for clam chowder, and they get out the dinghy and I'm afraid they're so drunk they'll turn it over before we get to the beach. Then the man tells me to go look for wood so we can build a fire on the beach and when I'm away I hear the gun go off and run back and Matthew Jim is lying on the beach, shot, and the other man is trying to get away in the dinghy."

"He shot himself," the man tells me, but I know that is a lie and say I will tell the police. And then he fired the gun at me, but he was very drunk and the dinghy was wobbling. Then he got aboard the big boat and pulled up the anchor and sailed out of the cove—and left me."

Craig leaned forward and wiped the perspiration from the child's brow.

"I stayed all night—with Matthew Jim. And the tide came in and..."

"I don't want to hear that part of it," Craig said quietly. "What did you do in the morning?"

"I started to walk. I walked all day. And then I slept on the beach that night. And walked again. And then the fat man found me. I didn't tell him anything because I was scared. I was scared the other man would find me and try to shoot me again, if I told."

The boy began to shudder, and Craig raised him by the shoulders and gently took him in his arms. "Don't worry, David," he said, "you're safe now. And you'll always be safe. Believe me."

"Will you stay with me?"

"Yes, I'll stay. As long as you need me."

"He waited again, and then he said: 'Try to think, David. Did you hear only the one name, Pete?'"

"Yes."

"And you never saw the man before?"

"No, sir. He was a man as old as you, maybe older. He had short brown hair and he was pretty tall. I don't know—I guess he just looked like any other man."

The boy seemed to slump in Craig's arms. But he whispered: "I feel better now."

Craig helped him to relax with his head against the pillows. There was a weak smile on the youngster's lips as he looked up.

"Just one more thing, David. Did people know you had left Retreat Inlet in Matthew Jim's boat?"

David shook his head. "No. I just leave when I want to go. Nobody cares."

"Not even your uncle?"

"My uncle has his own boys," the youngster said with a simplicity that made Craig bite his lip.

"What is your uncle's name?"

"Dick Capilano. But please—"

"I promised you, David."

Craig rose to his feet. When he went forward, and up to the wheelhouse, his eyes were red and his fingernails were digging into the palms of his clenched hands.

He was conscious of the nurse looking at him while he stood beside the wheel and stared out over the bow of the boat. Then suddenly he turned and in a harsh voice told Joan Chapman what the boy had said. Her face was white when he had finished.

"The poor child!" she murmured. "The poor, lonely little boy!"

He stared at her with a kind of wonder. For the first time he looked deep into her eyes, saw every contour and line of her face.

"Yes," he said, nodding his head slowly. "We were talking about loneliness weren't we? We don't really know anything about that, do we? But he does. You know," Craig said quietly, "I'm glad you said what you did."

She stared at him, a little bewildered.

Craig nodded again. "Because that was my reaction, too, sitting there and listening to him. I wasn't thinking of murder: of the killing of some poor Indian called Matthew Jim for seven hundred rotten dollars. I was thinking of that child, going out on fishboats because he doesn't have a real home, and people who don't care where he goes or what happens to him. I was thinking of him spending the night on a beach, beside a dead man's

body until the tide came and swept the body away, and then wandering through the woods, and the terror in his heart and . . ."

He stopped and shook his head and stared at the sea again. He heard the girl say softly: "I know. I know just how you feel."

"I'd like to find that man," he said harshly. "Not for murder; they can hang him for murder. I'd like to find him for what he did to the boy; for leaving him on that beach, for wanting him to die in the woods."

She touched his arm. "You feel very close to him," she said.

"Yes." He paused for a moment. "And that's strange, isn't it? Because I just picked him up yesterday, less than twenty-four hours ago."

"I don't think it's strange at all. But I am thinking that he was fortunate in the one who did pick him up."

He turned and looked at her, and she was near to him, one hand on the wheel and the other touching his arm.

"Thanks," he said. "It's my first experience. I'm not used to child passengers." He laughed, and it helped to ease the tenseness inside him. "Or to feminine passengers, for that matter."

"You're doing all right," she said, with a little smile, and then quickly asked: "What do you think happened to this man called Pete?"

"He'd have to ditch the boat somewhere," Craig said. "He wouldn't try to take it into Stone Harbor, and certainly not back to Retreat Inlet. He'd scuttle it, probably."

"But wouldn't it be reported missing by now?"

"Not necessarily. These Indians are often out in their boats for days, sometimes weeks. They don't report their movements. I'd like to talk to this Matthew Jim's family, if he has one. Perhaps they know a man named Pete."

"He sounds like a logger."

"He might be, he might be anything. All kinds and types drift in and out of Retreat Inlet. They come in on the steamer from Seattle or Vancouver, or down from Skagway and Juneau. I've been thinking of that steamer."

"Why?"

"Because," Craig told her, "if a man wanted to leave this country as quietly as possible, that's the way he'd go. There wouldn't be any business of hiring a plane, of giving a name and address, of sitting next to a pilot. He'd just go aboard the ship and melt into the crowd. And that would be Retreat Inlet. The steamer doesn't stop at Stone Harbor southbound."

"But—"

Craig barely heard the interruption. "I'm trying to be logical," he continued. "I'm trying to think how I

would act if I had killed someone and escaped in the dead man's boat. I don't think I'd go anywhere near Stone Harbor. I'd keep away from the mainland bush, partly because I'd left the boy there and partly because it's too tough. I think I'd head for Garabaldi Island. I could scuttle the boat in a dozen places and get ashore and walk into Retreat Inlet."

This time she did make herself heard when she interrupted. With a sudden lift to her voice she said: "There's land ahead."

He could see the first glimpse of the island, lying low on the horizon. He nodded, and then, half to himself, he said: "They picked up Pete at a deserted wharf just outside Retreat Inlet. I don't know what that means, except that it's likely no one saw Pete leave in the boat. In that case he would figure that he's almost safe now. The boat may be found eventually, or traces of it, but the Indian's body—" he shrugged. "This is a big country and a big sea, and bodies aren't often found up here. There's only the boy. It's almost a week now since the thing occurred—he'll be feeling pretty certain about the boy, too."

He turned, and she was staring at the distant outline of the island.

"I suppose," she said slowly, "that we're both thinking the same thing. David is the only witness. If the man ever discovers that he's alive—"

"Yes," Craig said.

She bit her lip.

"This Pete," Craig said. "As long as he's free, the boy's in danger. And full of fear. I wonder what it's like to be 9 and choking with fear every minute of the day and night. My God, the nights! I won't forget this last one."

She nodded, and there was silence between them for a few moments. They were both looking toward the land. Eventually she said: "I'll go below now. What will we do when we reach the harbor?"

"We'll keep the boy aboard."

He watched her descend into the cabin. He liked her; he liked the way she had handled the boy, and some of the things she had said, and the manner in which she was meeting this situation. But he could not involve her any further. When they reached Retreat Inlet he would suggest that she leave him and the child, and go about her duties whatever they were.

The thought of duties made him grimace. When the log of this voyage was forwarded to headquarters there would be a lot of questions to answer. What, for instance, was he doing in Retreat Inlet when he was supposed to be miles up the coast? How did he happen to damage his propeller on

a floating log when the night was clear? Since when had he been using the *Arbutus* to carry children?

They would be nasty, insistent questions, but somehow to Craig at the moment, they did not matter very much.

It was late afternoon before the boat slipped under the lee of the land and entered a wide inlet between tall mountains of fir and spruce. The village showed up almost immediately, a scraggling group of buildings that clung to the water's edge and the side of a steep hill, thickest in the immediate vicinity of the steamship wharf and its outcropping of minor jetties and landings.

The smaller wharves were crowded with fishing craft—gillnetters for the most part—but there was one open space with a sign OFFICIAL USE ONLY prominently displayed, and Craig eased the *Arbutus* into that spot. It was the berth used by the police boat whenever it was in Retreat Inlet. There was no shore detachment of the police here, and the absence of the boat told him he would have to contact Stone Harbor if he wanted help.

At the end of the jetty, a couple of old men were sitting, fishing poles in their hands, but they made no attempt to help him with his lines. No one else was in sight.

Once secured, he went below to the cabin and found Joan seated on the bunk with an arm around the boy. David was sitting up and his eyes were frightened again.

"We're here," the boy said in a high voice. "We're here, aren't we?"

Craig nodded.

"I don't want to go ashore!"

"You don't have to," Craig said.

"I promised you, remember?"

The boy started to cry, his face screwing up and big tears dripping over his dark, chubby cheeks. Craig felt suddenly dismayed, but then he caught Joan's eye and she gave him an encouraging nod and said gently to David: "There!" She leaned over and took a heavy cup from the nearby table and offered it to the boy. "Drink the rest of this, now."

The crying stopped as the boy took the cup. Joan nodded again to Craig and rose, and he followed her out of the cabin and on up to the wheelhouse.

"I thought the tears would never come," she said. "It worried me. It isn't good for a nine-year-old to hold back the tears that long."

"You've been very kind," Craig told her. "Thanks very much for agreeing to transfer from the plane. I'll let you know what happens."

She stared at him. "I beg your pardon?" she said.

"Well—"

WORDLY WISE



NOT ABLE TO HOLD A CANDLE TO

In colloquial speech, a person less capable than another is likely to be described as "not able to hold a candle to him." Innocent enough on the surface, the phrase goes back to the practice of early gamblers.

Lighting was the most serious problem faced by medieval devotees of the rolling bones. If a candle were placed on the gaming table, it would interfere with the fall of the dice. So it was customary to ask some onlooker to hold the candle while the gamblers played.

It was not unusual for a raw beginner to fall into the hands of veteran sharpers. In such cases, it seldom took long to clean out the amateur. After they had all his money, the players would make fun of their victim. Sometimes they would order him to hold the candle while they continued the game. At other times, they would consult one another and announce that he was not capable of even holding the candle. So by 1550 the expression "not able to hold a candle" had come to stand for a condition of complete inferiority.

By Webb Garrison

"You haven't any ridiculous notion that I'm leaving, by any chance?"

"You must have a job to do. You were flying up here."

"I'm here to inspect rows of small teeth, if that's what you mean. Don't you plan to go ashore?"

"Yes—"

"Then I'm staying with David until you get back."

He was glad to hear her say it, but the idea of it worried him. When he protested, however, she brushed aside his arguments with such crisp determination that he was reminded of how she had impressed him when she had first come aboard; the efficient, businesslike nurse.

It surprised him that he had almost forgotten her in that role. For a moment he just stared at her, until he realized that her color was getting quite high because of his scrutiny.

He said quickly: "If you do stay, lock the cabin doors. And if anyone comes along the wharf and stops, give the impression that the boat is deserted. This is government property. People don't usually snoop around." He stopped to find a cigarette and light it. "I'm going ashore to ask some questions."

He felt her hand on his arm.

"Please be careful," she said quietly.

He smiled at her. "They won't be the kind of questions that will get me into trouble," he said.

"Perhaps. But I'm thinking of that man. And of you saying what you would do if you were him—that you'd land on the island."

"I might be wrong. And, in any event, he doesn't know me. And I don't know him—not yet."

"Still, be careful," she said. "And come back as soon as you can."

He nodded, smiling again, and turned toward the door of the wheelhouse. When he had opened it and stood on the side of the boat, ready to step on to the wharf, he suddenly turned and said to her: "You know, you keep changing."

She was standing back in the wheelhouse, near the controls.

"For better or worse?"

"He stepped on to the wharf. 'I didn't mean that,' he called back. 'But sometimes, the uniform—'"

She had come to the door of the wheelhouse and she was almost laughing. "You mean it awes you? Come to Stone Harbor on a Saturday night and I'll try to dig up something in lavender and old lace."

She closed the wheelhouse door and disappeared below. He looked around him. The two old men were still sitting at the end of the wharf, still hunched over their fishing poles and oblivious to everything else.

He turned to the left and started to walk along the wooden plankings to the shore and eventually to the

main street of Retreat Inlet. At a float adjacent to the wharf he saw the small aircraft that had delivered Joan Chapman, and seeing it again he remembered the name of the pilot, Joe Shanks, who was president of the Stone Harbor Golf Club and the life of the party.

The main street of Retreat Inlet was a dirt road that in places showed the last black spots of oiling, but was mostly brown and rut-marked and covered with a thin layer of dust. The buildings that flanked it were dusty, too, and old and weatherbeaten, including the Island Hotel, which looked different from the other structures only because it was larger.

There were people walking on the street, and Craig nodded to some he recognized. Then he reached the small building that housed the fisheries office and went in, looking for Harry Rutherford.

A boy met him instead, getting up from an ancient roll-top desk in the corner and greeting him by name.

"Where's Harry?" Craig asked.

"He's out on the boat, Mr. Dawson. There are a couple of messages for you."

He handed two slips of flimsy paper to Craig and the latter glanced at them. They were orders from headquarters, dispatched on the supposition that he was miles up the coast and that they would be retransmitted to him.

"You look tired, Mr. Dawson."

He wasn't surprised the fatigue was showing. On the short walk up from the wharves he had found his feet lagging and an uncomfortable tightness in his chest.

"Do you know where I can find the house of an Indian called Matthew Jim?"

The office boy's eyes grew wide. "Do you know anything about that, Mr. Dawson?"

"What?"

"Well, that's why Mr. Rutherford is out in the boat. They picked up some wreckage that looked as though it came from Matthew Jim's gillnetter. The Indian left here a few days ago for Stone Harbor. This morning they checked, and he hadn't arrived there. So they're afraid his boat may have sunk."

"Rutherford's out searching?"

"That's right, Mr. Dawson."

"Where was this wreckage found?"

"Off the south shore of the island."

His nerves tightened a little, but he was not surprised. It was extremely difficult to scuttle a boat without a trace. And he had been right about one thing: the man Pete had returned to Garabaldi Island.

Pete.

"What men do you know around town with the first name of Pete?"



The boy was surprised by the question. He puckered up his brow and tried to think. "Well, I don't know—there's Pete Burns, the barber."

Craig knew him. Pete Burns, the barber, was at least sixty years of age. "And there's Pete MacArthur, drives a logging truck."

"What does he look like?"

"Well, he's a pretty big fellow, about two hundred pounds, with red hair."

"Anyone else?" Craig remembered now that young David had said that he had not known the man prior to the trip. "Any new men in town by that name?"

The office boy shook his head. "None that I can think of, right now, Mr. Dawson."

"Well, keep thinking, Arthur. And where do I find Matthew Jim's place?"

"It's the third house on the right when you come to the Indian village."

Craig left the forestry office. He climbed the rest of the main street and turned along a narrow, deep-rutted road that led to the Indian settlement. The houses here were smaller than those in Retreat Inlet itself; smaller and even more dilapidated.

There was no porch nor any other adornment to the third house on the right. Behind it was the hint of a vegetable garden and the tiny front yard was littered with empty tins, most of them rusty. A half-collapsed rain barrel stood at the farthest corner.

He walked to the open door and looked in. A woman sat on a rocker near the big stove that stood in the center of the room. It was obvious that she had been crying, and he hesitated.

But she had seen him. She got up quickly, and said: "You have news of my husband?"

"I'm sorry," Craig said. "I haven't."

The woman nodded her head in a kind of hopeless confirmation.

"I wanted to ask you about a friend of your husband—a man named Pete."

She looked at him. "Pete—Pete who?"

"I don't know his last name. He's a white man. He knew your husband."

"Pete," She shrugged. "I know a lot of Petes."

"This man is about my age. With short brown hair."

She thought for a moment. "Sure. That's one Pete. I know him. He comes here sometimes with Matthew Jim."

Craig's pulse quickened. "What's his last name?"

"Just Pete, that's all I know. He was here a couple of weeks ago." She almost snarled. "He got drunk with my husband."

"What does he do?"

"He's a logger."

"With the Garabaldi Timber Company?"

"That's right." Her eyes narrowed.

"Why do you ask me these questions?"

He did not reply. Instead he murmured, "I'm sorry to have disturbed you," and left the house, feeling pity for the woman, realizing that sooner or later she would have to know the truth. But if he spoke of murder now, in this village, it would be all over the island with the speed of fire.

He had to move carefully, quietly. And he had something now; there was a Pete who had known Matthew Jim, who worked for the big Garabaldi Company, whose timber limits covered most of the island.

A young Indian passed him on the street, nodded to him, and Craig stopped the boy with the question: "Which house is Dick Capilano's?"

The young man gestured across the road to a weatherbeaten frame dwelling that was almost identical with the others. It had a porch, however, and at one corner of this a boy was sawing a piece of driftwood, cutting it into stove lengths. Beside the open door, on a rickety chair, an elderly man was half-asleep, a stubby pipe hanging from his lips under a scraggly mustache.

There was some resemblance to young David, Craig thought. He started to cross the road, to approach the house, and then he changed his mind. If this were Dick Capilano, the uncle, he did not trust himself to talk to the man now. Everything about the dozing figure breathed indifference and laziness. The man slept, and a nine-year-old boy had been gone for almost a week.

So Craig checked himself, and turned back along the road and out of the village.

In the Inlet proper he went first to the local boat-building shop and arranged with the proprietor to run the *Arbutus* up on the marine railway with low tide in the morning and have the propeller inspected and repaired. That was something that had to be done. Then he returned to the fisheries office.

Young Arthur was still on duty behind the roll-top desk. "Hello, Mr. Dawson," he said. "I've been thinking of that name Pete. I can't recall any except the ones I mentioned."

"This Pete might be a logger," Craig said.

"In that case, I wouldn't know him. Except for the regular crews, the loggers come in and out of this place by the dozens."

"Arthur," Craig said. "I want you to connect me with the police at Stone Harbor."

The boy's eyes widened. "Yes, Mr.

"And, Arthur, anything you hear me say, I want you to forget you heard it. Do you understand that?"

"Yes, sir."

He walked with the boy to the radio room in the rear of the building. He waited while Arthur tried to contact Stone Harbor. He listened as the connection was made, smoking a cigarette nervously, until the boy nodded and turned to him and said: "Okay, Mr. Dawson. They're putting the police on."

He sat down in front of the instrument panel and listened to the voice coming through from Stone Harbor: a distant, crackling voice asking for identification.

He gave his name. Then in a slow, clear voice he began to tell the story as he knew it, as young David Goliath Capilano had told it.

He was interrupted once. "Yes, we had a report of wreckage being sighted. We've sent a boat. Go on."

Later the distant voice broke in again. "This Pete. You have positive identification?"

"No," Craig said wearily.

"In other words, it might be this Pete or a dozen other Petes."

"It might be."

"And this man we want might also be a thousand miles from the Inlet."

"He might be."

"But you have the kid, though. And he can give identification—if he's telling the truth."

"He's telling the truth," Craig said bluntly.

"Yes. Well, thanks, Mr. Dawson. We'll broadcast the description. If he landed on the island—and I've got to admit that's as logical a guess as any—"

"It's more than a guess," Craig interrupted. "It's common sense for a man in his position."

"Sure. As I just said, it's logical. Come to think of it, the southbound steamer calls in there day after tomorrow. We'll watch that. It's a possibility. You wouldn't perhaps figure that this Indian kid—he sounds pretty neurotic to me—and the way that youngsters imagine things, you know— Can you hear me?"

"Yes," Craig said.

"We'll contact our patrol boat. In any case we'll fly a man up there. Just hold on to the boy. Thanks, Mr. Dawson. I'm signing off now."

After a moment Craig rose from his chair and looked at Arthur. The office boy's face was pale and he was biting his lips.

"Pete," the boy murmured. "That's why you wanted to know about a man named Pete."

"Yes, Arthur. I want you to keep silent about it."

"I will, Mr. Dawson. I will."

Arthur wet his lips. "I know that David kid. His father's in the Navy. His mother's dead."

"And he lives with his uncle."

"That's right. If you can call it that. He lives there in winter when he has to go to school. But the uncle's not much good, Mr. Dawson. And in the summer, the kid gets jobs on the fishboats. He's just a tiny little fellow."

"I know."

Arthur followed Craig to the front of the office. The boy appeared unable to say any more. He just looked at the older man with a kind of awe in his eyes, and Craig touched him on the arm and asked: "What sort of a man is the boy's father, Arthur?"

"Oh—he's first-rate, Mr. Dawson. He's a nice fellow. I guess he thinks the boy is being looked after. Someone should tell him what's happening."

"You know, Arthur," Craig said, "I think someone will."

He cautioned the office boy again, and left the office and started down the main street to the wharves. A hint of darkness was in the sky.

THERE was silence aboard the *Arbutus*. He climbed over the side and stood in front of the cabin door and said clearly: "It's Dawson." A moment later the door opened and Joan looked up at him. Her face was quite pale, and she gave a little sigh and murmured, "Thank God! You've been a long time."

He walked into the cabin. David was sitting up on the bunk, his eyes still a little fevered-looking, but when he saw Craig he smiled.

"Hello, son," Craig said. He turned to Joan. "I have a lead," he told her. "How's coffee? Let's go into the galley."

She followed him into the tiny compartment and standing there, close together, he told her what he had discovered and of his conversation with the police at Stone Harbor.

"It's almost dark," he said. "Any time now the loggers will be hitting town. There's a boss I know—a man named Wilson, one I can trust—who should be with them. He can tell me about this Pete. And whatever he tells me I can pass on to the police when they get here. I may have the wrong man, but it seems to connect, doesn't it? He knew Matthew Jim. As the wife says, he was at their house a couple of weeks ago."

"But he may be most anywhere by now."

"I still think he's on the island. But wherever he is, the police can go to work without exposing the boy. It's only the boy he could be afraid of, and he believes the boy is dead. He must. He wouldn't know about

Potter's cabin—only a handful of people do, the mission padres and I."

"You wanted some coffee," she said. "I'll light the stove."

He shook his head. "I'm going back up town. I'll just say a word to the boy."

She was near him, looking into his eyes. "If you're leaving again," she said, "I think you'd better kiss me this time."

He stared at her.

"I'd feel better about it," she added, quietly.

She did not try to move away from him after he had kissed her. He could feel her trembling as she whispered: "It was after you left that—well, the whole thing seemed to catch up with me. The thought of murder, and that little boy shaking for his life every minute you were gone—and sitting here wondering what was happening to you."

She looked up at him. "You've called the police. Couldn't the three of us just wait for them?"

"I have to find out about this Pete. I have to know whether I'm on the right track or not."

They moved into the cabin and Craig sat down beside the boy.

"David," he said, "you'll stay aboard with me tonight."

The black eyes looked trustfully into his. "Yes, sir," the boy said.

"I'm not sure yet, but I think, when Miss Chapman returns to Stone Harbor, she'll probably take you with her. Isn't that right, Miss Chapman?"

"Yes," Joan said.

"We want the people at the Agency to talk to you—about your home. And I'll tell you another thing, David. I'm going to find where your father is, and write him, and tell him what a good young man you are, and how you miss him."

The youngster's eyes became tear-filled. He clutched Craig's hand. Then his expression changed abruptly.

"The man?"

"We'll find him soon. And when we do, he'll never bother you again."

When he left the boat and started up toward the village, the light was fading rapidly. Even the old fishermen had called it a day and left their places on the end of the wharf. Aboard one of the fishing boats, somewhere, he heard the plaintive twang of a guitar, but it was the only sound along the waterfront and among the jetties.

Things were much different in front of the Island Hotel. The dust of the roadway was being kicked up by the rumbling wheels of giant logging trucks and trailers as their drivers brought them into town and parked the huge machines wherever they could find a space. Jeeps and dilapidated old jalopies roared up to the

hotel, and sweaty, dirt-streaked loggers got out of them and straggled toward the bar entrance at the side, the caulks of their heavy boots leaving imprints in the dust.

It was the end of the day, the return from the woods. It was the time for cold beer, and wetting dry throats and relaxation.

Craig was about to enter the bar when he saw a red jeep drive up. He turned and walked toward it and met the man who had been sitting next to the driver and who was now standing on the road; a big, broad man with a shock of curly hair and an open, bronzed face, whose name was Wilson.

THE man saw Craig, smiled with pleasure and shook hands.

"Nice to see you, Craig."

"I'm seeking information, Frank," Craig said. "Confidential information."

"Yes?"

"A man called Pete. I don't know the last name. But I understand he's a logger and works for you—or did."

The logging foreman scratched his curly hair. "I could name about five Petes, offhand. I run a fairly big show. Describe this one."

Craig gave him the description, and Wilson listened.

"It sounds like Hobson. I had a man named Pete Hobson. Laid him off with Number Five gang a week ago. We had cut to the limit on Opal Point and I let go about a dozen men."

"Have you seen him since?"

The foreman shrugged. "I don't know—I imagine I have. I imagine he's still around town with the others. They'd stay for the steamer, most of them. For one thing, we buy their return tickets. That's part of the contract."

"Where would I find him?"

"In the hotel here. Or at Mother Maud's boarding house." The foreman looked closely at Craig. "What has he been doing—starting fires?"

"No."

"Anything that involves our company?"

Craig shook his head. "I want a line on him, Frank. If he's still here, I want to have him pointed out to me, without him knowing it."

"Well, I'll go along with you, Craig. Tell you what—I have to drop over to the office and file my report. It won't take more than a couple of minutes. You go into the bar and set up a few beers for us and I'll join you." He scratched his head again. "My God, you look as though you could do with a drink. What have you been doing, staying up nights?"

He did not wait for a reply. He waved his hand and started to walk along the street to where a small build-

ing bore the sign "Garabaldi Timber Company."

Craig entered the hotel by the front entrance. There was a small, dark lobby with a lounge off to one side. The latter looked deserted, but behind the desk in the lobby an old man was reading a dog-eared magazine, resting it on a plate-glass frame that contained cigarettes and tobacco. Craig knew him as Hughie.

"Afternoon, Mr. Dawson," the old man said. "Or rather, evening." As though the thought had reminded him, he flicked a couple of light switches and the ancient lobby lost some of its darkness. "Want a room, Mr. Dawson, or living on your boat this trip?"

"On the boat, Hughie. I'd like a pack of cigarettes."

He gave his order and the old man opened the glass case and fished out the cigarettes.

"How's business, Hughie?"

"Pretty fair."

"I expect you'll be losing some customers to the steamer."

"Four or five. They come and go."

"Anyone in the house I might know?"

"Well, there's Mr. Wainwright, from Juneau."

"Oh, yes."

"And the Reverend Mr. Hollis."

Craig picked a name out of the air. "Jerry Black?"

The old man thought and shook his head. "Don't know him, Mr. Dawson. He's not in the house, anyway."

"Pete Hobson?"

Old Hughie nodded. "Sure, he came back day before yesterday."

CRAIG'S muscles had become suddenly taut. The words "came back" seemed to boom in his head.

He noticed that the old man behind the desk was chuckling, and quietly he asked: "What's the joke, Hughie?"

"Well—you know the way it is. A guy comes out of the woods with a few other guys, and they're waiting for the boat with a pile of money in their pockets, and they get into a poker game. Somebody's got to lose and that's what happened to Hobson—every cent. I was there. And the next day he's gone and the room rent not paid, and you figure it's a skip, and what are you going to do?"

Old Hughie grinned. "The joke's on me, all right, but not the way I expect. Because, by gosh, he's back in a couple of days—he went visiting folks up island and got into a party—and so here he is. You know, Mr. Dawson, I'm telling you this because it was enough to make an old hotel clerk like me believe all over again in the human race. You get welched on so many times, it sort of shocks you to find an honest man."

Craig had rammed the pack of cigarettes into his pocket. His nerves were jumping now, and he wanted to get away from old Hughie. He wanted to break off the subject, to let the old man forget it. He had asked too many questions, as it was, of too many people.

Old Hughie called after him: "If you want Hobson, you'll probably find him in the bar."

Craig mumbled thanks and moved away toward the door, and then out into the street. The sudden night was closing in and the trucks and jeeps that were still arriving at Retreat Inlet had their headlights on now. For a moment he hesitated.

The picture was complete now, and every sequence seemed to fit. The man had lost his stake in a poker game. It would be big money, if it was loggers' pay; important money. Perhaps he had really intended to skip the hotel. Perhaps Matthew Jim had offered a way out. That explained the secretive departure from the deserted wharf. And then a drunken night and the opportunity of seven hundred dollars staring him in the face when he was penniless. But in the end he had been left with the boat, and he had to rid himself of that. He could take it to the island and a place where he could scuttle it without being spotted, and get ashore. And then come back into Retreat Inlet and tell old Hughie his story about friends, and perhaps how he had managed a loan to pay the hotel bill, and plan to take the steamer with the other laid-off men, his movements perfectly natural, his ticket paid in advance, and then, at his final destination, money in his pocket.

And a feeling of safety; as much as he would ever have.

Craig shook his head sharply. For a second he had felt dizzy. He had been on his feet a long time, he realized, and probably it was fatigue that had given him a turn like that. It was better to keep moving, and not allow himself to relax.

He remembered Frank Wilson and went around the side of the hotel to the bar entrance. He could trust Wilson, as much as he could trust anyone, and he needed help. The big foreman could identify Hobson, and watch the man without creating any suspicion until the police arrived. It was in Craig's mind now to take the *Arbutus* out of the harbor, and anchor her somewhere for the night and keep the boy away from the scene. The child was in danger until the hand-cuffs were on Hobson's wrists.

If this Pete Hobson were the right man. Craig had been so certain of his deductions that now, with his foot on the doorstep of the bar, he was assailed with doubt. He had no proof;

and there could be no proof until David was face to face with the man.

Craig opened the door of the bar and walked in.

The smoky room was too small for the crowd it was attempting to handle. It was like a hundred other north country beer parlors, furnished with the bare necessities of its type of place—wooden tables and straight-back chairs and a big, pot-bellied stove in the center of the room, unlit now because of the warm weather and functioning solely as a target for cigarette butts and burned matches. There was an unadorned bar at one end of the room, with one man behind it and two waiters scurrying back and forth.

Wilson was not in sight. Craig saw two men get up and leave a table next to the wall and he moved toward it and sat down. He ordered beer when the waiter shot past, and he looked around him at the crowd.

Which one? What man among them had murdered an Indian fisherman and left a nine-year-old boy to die in the woods? He tried to see all their faces, tried to find one that answered to the boy's description; but he failed.

HALF the room was listening to a man at one of the crowded center tables. Craig recognized this as the Regulars Table, the meeting place of the Hot Stove League, an inevitable institution in the north. The speaker was elderly, and quite full of beer, and he was talking about Matthew Jim's missing fishboat.

He had the whole thing figured out. There had been a blow that night and Matthew Jim had decided to head back for the island, and maybe the Indian's engine had broken down on him, and he had been driven onto the rocks. That was the logical solution. That was the way it had happened, without a doubt.

Frank Wilson entered the bar. Craig saw him immediately and raised his arm and the big foreman walked over and sat down. With a grin, and without a word, he reached over the table and took up one of the glasses of beer the waiter had brought. He drank until there was nothing but foam at the bottom of the glass. Then he put it down and grinned again.

"It's a hot life, Craig," he said. "What are you doing in—oh, you wanted this fellow Hobson." He rose and looked around the room. "I don't see him," he announced. "Wait a minute."

He crossed the room to the bar and Craig saw him talking to the bartender. Then he came back and sat down again. "Hobson was in here a few minutes ago, according to Michael at the bar. You'll probably find him in

his room, if he's staying here. What's it about, Craig?"

He could trust this big logging foreman. Wilson was the closest thing to the law in Retreat Inlet; in fact, he was the law so far as the loggers were concerned.

So Craig leaned forward across the table and told him most of the story. And when he had finished Wilson's eyes were dark as the big man said: "My God, I believe you! I'd like to get his neck between my hands."

"That should be my privilege."

THE foreman looked at Craig. "Yes," he said slowly. "Yes, I can see that. Do you want to take him now?" "No. Because it might misfire. I want him to walk into the hands of the police with his eyes closed. That's the better way—for the boy, for everyone concerned."

"Does anyone else know about this?"

"Outside of Joan—the nurse—only Arthur at the fisheries office."

"Arthur's solid." The foreman tapped the table. "You know, I can't help thinking what a lot of people would have done in your position. In the first place, they would not have picked up the boy. A little Indian kid, nothing but a damned nuisance. Or they would have landed the boy on the wharf here and told him to get home with his wild story of murder."

"No—"

"Yes. That kid was pretty lucky." Wilson rose. "I'll take a look in the dining room. I'll be back."

He walked away and Craig closed his eyes for a moment, fighting weariness. When he opened them again, the man was suddenly standing in front of the table.

He was dressed in a pair of gabardine pants, an open-necked shirt and a light windbreaker. He was holding a chair with one hand, and his good-looking young face was smiling when he said: "Mind if I join you?" and without waiting for an answer he made signals to a passing waiter for more beer. Then he sat down.

He smiled again, addressing himself to Craig. "How's Joannie?" he asked.

Craig stiffened. One of his hands gripped the side of the table and the other doubled suddenly.

"I'm Shanks," the young man said. "Joe Shanks. I was piloting the plane."

"Oh." Craig's muscles relaxed slightly. "I'm sorry. I didn't get a good look at you in the plane."

"How's the patient?"

"Better," Craig said.

"He's not a hospital case, then?"

"No."

It was obvious to Craig that the pilot was leading up to something.

There was an amused glint in the man's eyes, and when the waiter brought the drinks he had ordered he gave Craig a half-humorous silent toast over the rim of his glass before he took a sip of the beer.

"I was wondering," he said, "how long you intended to keep Joan incommunicado?"

"Pardon?"

"Aboard your boat. She is aboard your boat, isn't she?"

Then suddenly the pilot sat back. He pushed his glass of beer a little toward the center of the table.

"Look," he said, "excuse me for sitting with you. I didn't intend to be out of line."

"No," Craig said quickly, "it's not that at all. Did you go aboard my boat? Did you see Miss Chapman?"

The pilot shook his head. "I haven't been near your boat."

"Then how did you know?"

"About Joannie?" The pilot tried to act relaxed, but he was nervous. His voice sounded a little false. "Well, you know a joint like this, in a village this size. I was sitting having a beer with the gang when Purdy—that's the man from the local boat-builders, but you know that, of course—he came in here and first thing he's telling the room about going to your boat to check on a propeller that you wanted repaired tomorrow morning, and he says—jokingly of course—that the forestry officer has a woman aboard, and that's something new for you."

"Go ahead," Craig said sharply.

"Look—I wasn't anything wrong about this, I'm sure. Old Purdy just likes to talk. And anyway—you know, still joking—he said there couldn't be any scandal about it because there was a kid with her. A local kid, I think he said his name was something fantastic like David Goliath Capilano—and I imagine that's the same one, I mean the boy who was sick . . ."

The chair nearly toppled over behind Craig. He was on his feet, and he heard Frank Wilson's voice calling: "Wait, Craig! Where are you going?" but he had turned for the door, almost colliding with a waiter who cursed at him.

He got through the door, brushing against some customers about to enter, and a strong hand grabbed his arm and said, "Just hold up a bit, mister." He looked into the face of a big logger, and with more strength than he thought he possessed, he broke away from the grip and spun around the side of the building, staggering in the dirt.

The only light on the main street of Retreat Inlet came from the windows of the flanking buildings and the stopped cars. It was enough for him to see his way, but when he reached

the bottom of the hill, the darkness closed in on him and the waterfront and the wharves were almost obscured by the night.

He had been running, but now he pulled himself up, conscious of the pounding of his heart, his lips dry and his eyes smarting. Ahead of him was the jetty where the *Arbutus* lay moored, and he was trying to make out the shape of her. A glimmer of starlight from the half-clouded sky helped him a little, and when his eyes grew more accustomed to the darkness, he was able to see her.

There were no lights aboard. The wharf looked deserted, and the rows of fishboats on the other side lay dark and silent.

He moved forward slowly, walking carefully and quietly. In his mind he was trying to convince himself that his fears were only based on a supposition, on the chance that the man called Pete had overheard the things that had been said about the nurse and David being aboard the forestry boat. The bartender had said that Pete Hobson had been in the bar. When? And why had he left? Because he had heard Purdy talking, or for some reason of his own?

Craig had almost reached the bow of the *Arbutus*. He heard no sound except his own muffled footsteps, and behind him the occasional hoot of a truck horn.

He stood on the edge of the wharf, beside the black shape of the big boat. The darkness and the silence that surrounded the *Arbutus* gave him a feeling of panic that was transferred, almost as quickly, into action.

He leaped aboard the boat and burst into the wheelhouse. He stumbled below and against the locked door of the main cabin, and in the darkness cried: "Joan!"

Silence answered him. "Joan!" he repeated. "It's Craig!"

He drew back, prepared to raise his foot and smash in the door, when he heard the latch move. His hands were against the door when it opened and he almost fell into the cabin, groping in the darkness, touching a shoulder, the sleeve of a blouse, and then drawing her toward him until she was in his arms and he could feel the trembling of her body.

"God," he whispered. "I shouldn't have left you this long! David?"

"He's here, beside me."

He felt a pressure against his leg and with one hand he reached down and touched the thick, tough hair of the boy's head.

Joan's cheek brushed against his and her voice came to him in a whisper. "No lights. He's outside—I know it."

"How?"

"A man came here."
 "From the boat-builders—"
 "No!" The whisper was urgent.
 "Later than that—another man. I
 could hear him on the wharf. He was
 walking back and forth. It was dark
 then, and after a time he called to me."

"To you?"
 "To the nurse. He was calling, 'Is
 the nurse aboard? She's wanted at
 the hotel. Somebody's been hurt.'
 The voice didn't sound real. It was
 phony—like a trick to draw me out. I
 didn't move. And then I heard other
 voices—perhaps men from the fishing
 boats on the other side—I don't know.
 But he didn't call again. And then the
 other voices vanished. Perhaps he was
 frightened away. But it was him—I
 know it was him!"

Craig held her close, but she was
 not trembling now. The shock of
 his entrance had passed, and she was
 calmer. Even her voice was changing
 when she asked him: "What do you
 think?"

"I think he's waiting for a chance,"
 Craig said. And he was about to
 add, "To get at the boy, alone," when
 he felt David's hand reaching for his,
 and he stopped.

"I'm going to cast off," he said. "I'm
 going to take you out into the stream
 where you'll be safer if he decides to
 make a move. I think he must be
 frightened now. But still he can't be
 sure of anything. I want him to
 come out in the open. I don't want
 to frighten him so badly he'll run for
 the bush."

He held her shoulders and said:
 "Sit down with David. I'm going up
 top."

"Craig—"
 "Lavender and old lace," he mur-
 mured. "It wouldn't suit you."

He groped his way up to the wheel-
 house and went out on deck on the
 side away from the wharf. Slowly and
 quietly he moved around to the stern
 and for a moment stopped and lis-
 tened. He heard nothing, and he
 could see nothing but the bulky out-
 line of the wharf and the suggestion,
 blacker than the night, of the masts
 of the fishing boats on the other side.

He slipped the stern line from its
 bollard, but kept the rope from drop-
 ping into the water. Then he turned
 and started forward again and reached
 the small forecabin deck. He knelt
 and got his hands on the headline and
 started to untie it. The rope had
 snagged and in the darkness he had
 to pull and tug, but still the line re-
 fused to run free.

He straightened and reached in his
 pocket for his knife. As he did so, he
 looked toward the wharf. Then he
 froze.

The outline of the man's figure was
 quite clear. And as the man ad-
 vanced, slowly and silently, the body

FISHERMAN'S DOZEN



■ This has to do with laws and game wardens and, specifically, trout. If you've ever climbed out of a sleeping bag before the sun has risen and headed up a mountain stream, then returned to camp with enough trout to fry over the campfire for breakfast—if you have, then you know there is probably nothing on earth more pleasing to the palate. But there is a law aimed at the preservation of wild life which can be a heavy cross for the angler to tote around.

Many states assert clearly that it is a punishable offense to catch more than ten pounds. Which, as can easily be seen, is apt to lead to difficulties. Such as this hypothetical example: the warden lays a heavy hand on the shoulder of an angler as he's hauling in a dilly. It weighs, let's say, 2½ or 3 pounds. The gentleman with the badge inspects those already resting on damp green leaves in the fisherman's creel: 8½ pounds of beautiful speckled trout. "The legal bag limit is ten pounds!" he growls.

The obvious fact that a disciple of Isak Walton cannot put in his order as to size when he makes his cast makes no never-mind. It has, however, led to what those not of the fishing gentry might consider very queer phraseology indeed in the game laws of some states. The wording in Colorado, for instance: "The legal bag limit for trout is 10 pounds and one fish."

Which makes a great deal of sense. Sportsmen, when the going gets good, hate to stop before they've reached the legal stop sign of ten pounds. And far too often the very last trout has turned out to be the one they'll brag about to their envious friends as they point to it, mounted, in the place of honor above the fireplace in the den. But it has also resulted, not infrequently, in explanations to the judge.

We might perhaps caption it "Waltonian Wisdom," this provision which has found its way into the statute books of some states, the provision of so many pounds and one fish.

—Mary Allus

took on shape and bulk and height. But, in the darkness, there was no face.

Craig stood up without moving. "You're leaving here?" a voice asked. It was a deep, hard voice.

Craig said: "I'm just checking my fies."

"You're leaving. You've got a kid aboard—an Indian kid."

It was here at last. Strangely, there was a kind of relief. A figure in the dark; a faceless man, but the right one.

A stab of light struck Craig in the eyes and blinded him. He shielded his face and turned his head away for an instant, and then looked back into the beam of a flashlight.

"Tell him to come on deck," the voice commanded.

Craig stared into the powerful light aimed at him.

"You're wrong," he said. "No. He's aboard. I've been watching you. You came down here and went aboard and didn't show any light. So you've got him. Look." The beam of light moved slightly and Craig caught the glint of metal. "I'm holding this flash in one hand. In the other there's a gun. Now do you understand? Get the kid on deck."

Craig turned sharply at a sound behind him. The flashlight moved almost in unison, and through the wheelhouse window he saw the white face of Joan Chapman. She came to the door.

"Tell him to go away, Craig," she said clearly. "Tell him to mind his own damned business."

She sounded angry and insulted, and perhaps a little drunk. In that instant he thought she was magnificent, and for a moment he almost believed that her attempts had succeeded; there was silence from the man behind the flashlight.

"He's looking for an Indian boy," Craig said.

"Then why doesn't he go to the Indian village?"

The voice from the wharf broke in and told her to be quiet. The light had come back to Craig again. Now he could sense that something else had caught the attention of the faceless man.

Craig turned his head, suddenly conscious of other lights, and looking shoreward he saw that they were advancing from the direction of Retreat Inlet's main street. He thought of Frank Wilson; that would be the logging boss and some of his men. It was a certainty that the lights were heading straight for the wharf.

The man behind the flashlight evidently realized it. The beam was lowered so that it struck the bollard at Craig's feet.

"Cast off that line!"

Craig remained motionless.

"Do it now," the voice said. "Do it, or I'll use the gun."

He heard Joan say: "He means it, Craig."

And she was right, he knew. He had recognized the sudden high note of panic in the man's voice. The lights slowly advancing on the wharf were cutting off the way of escape, and the man knew it, and he would use the gun.

Craig took the jackknife from his pocket, opened it and cut the rope.

"Throw the knife away," the voice ordered. "Get in the wheelhouse and start the engine. And keep the lights out."

Craig moved toward the wheelhouse. The flashlight was extinguished and he heard the sudden thump of footsteps on the deck. Then the dark figure was close by, at the door of the wheelhouse.

"Start the engine. Get the boat out of here."

Craig felt Joan's body against his, the pressure of her hand on his arm. He did as he was ordered without saying a word, bringing the engine to life and going astern from the wharf until the *Arbutus* was clear.

The advancing lights had almost reached the shore end of the jetty.

"Now swing around and head out the inlet," the voice ordered. The man had braced himself against the door jamb in a position that gave him control of the interior of the wheelhouse and the outer deck. "And give her a full throttle."

Craig brought the *Arbutus* around. He thrust the throttle full ahead and he could hear the engine roar, vibrating the boat. For the first few moments there was a slight increase in speed but after that he could almost feel the damaged propeller whirling impotently.

Joan's hand was still on his arm, and the pressure was steady and without panic. He looked ahead, and now the starlight gave him the faint outline of the shores of the inlet. Beyond, in a direct line with the bow of the *Arbutus*, was the open sea.

"What's the matter?"

The voice was sharp and menacing. The beam of the flashlight struck the wheel in Craig's hands and the controls. It centered on the throttle. Then it went out.

"What's the matter with your engine? Why aren't we getting more speed?"

"I have a damaged propeller," Craig said evenly.

Silence followed his words. He could sense that the man had turned and was looking back toward the receding wharf.

"They'll be coming after us," Craig said.

There was no comment from the dark figure.

Craig spoke slowly. "They'll come after us," he repeated. "And any one of those boats in the harbor can catch us easily even before we get to the mouth of the inlet."

This time he was almost interrupted, so sharply did the voice bark out.

"Call the boy. Bring him into the wheelhouse."



"It's not proper salesmanship, but Ward sells many a bedroom set."

"We've told you—" Joan began, and the voice broke in again, louder now. "Come up here, kid! Come out of that cabin."

In Craig's heart was a prayer that young David would not answer. But it died when he heard a scraping on the steps leading up from the cabin. The flashlight went on, and he turned his head and saw the boy's face: brownish-gray in the gleam of the light, and his wide, staring eyes and his trembling lips.

"Don't hurt them!" the child pleaded.

"Come over here by the door. They won't be hurt if you do just what I say."

The boy groped toward the door and the light went out again.

"You at the wheel," the man said. "Alter a few degrees to your right. Get closer to the far shore."

The *Arbutus* swung to starboard as Craig moved the wheel. He was shaking suddenly, and trying desperately to keep control of what remained of his senses. The brief sight of the boy's face had made him choke up inwardly to the point where he felt something about to burst, to carry him away in a flood. His hands held the wheel like a vise.

He heard the voice saying: "There's a wharf somewhere close by. I'll pick it up in the flashlight, and you head for it."

It came to Craig's mind vaguely that this would be the same deserted wharf where the man originally had boarded Matthew, Jim's boat. Hobson would know that wharf. He would know the trails leading away from it.

The whole thing was suddenly and brutally clear. When they came alongside that wharf, only two people would step ashore; the man and the boy. Only two people would disappear into the woods.

"Straighten out a bit," the voice ordered. "You're getting in too close. I'll tell you."

Craig found himself saying: "It won't work."

"What? By God, you'll land at that wharf—"

"It won't work," Craig repeated in a clear, even voice. "It's too late for that. It was too late when you left the boy on the beach. You think you can still fix that; eliminate the only witness. But you're wrong. Because if you take the boy, we're still here. And if you kill us, there are still others. On and on—until they get you."

Craig did not need the flashlight to tell him that the wharf was looming up ahead. It jutted out from the wooded shore, and starlight rippled on the waters that washed its pilings.

"There it is," the voice said. "Go

alongside and keep your engine running. Step out on deck, kid. And do what I tell you."

"It's too late," Craig repeated in a flat voice. "Too late to hide behind a flashlight." Slowly his arm went out in the darkness and pushed Joan away from his side, toward the rear of the wheelhouse. "I can't see your face. I've never seen it. But that's not good enough for you. Because I know you, Hobson."

He had struck at the core. The light flared straight into his eyes, blinding him. But he faced it and he kept talking. In his mind he was counting the seconds against a stretch of water, the thrust of a damaged propeller and 40 feet of boat.

"They all know you, Hobson. Wilson, your ex-boss, and Matthew Jim's wife, and soon the police. Where is the end? Because you know—can't you see it, Hobson—that you've got to kill me before you get the boy ashore?"

His eyes were unseeing and unblinking in the beam of the flashlight. "Throw the gun away! Run, Hobson—run, now!"

He had counted out the seconds. They had all run out.

And he was moving when the boat struck.

He heard the man utter a cry, the shout broken by the crash of the hull against splintering timbers as the boat ploughed into the wharf. The flashlight made crazy gyrations, and as he slammed against the wheelhouse doorway, Craig thought he heard the gun go off.

The flashlight had rolled along the deck, and suddenly went out, but the effect of its glare was still in Craig's eyes and he was blind when he flung himself across the narrow deck.

Yet in that second he could feel the presence of the figure, knocked off balance by the crash of the boat, half-sprawled against the gunwale. And when his hands reached out they grasped cloth, and held on, and he pushed.

He pushed violently, desperately, afraid of the gun that he could not see. And he felt the man's body bend, the logger's boots scraping on the deck as Hobson kicked out and tried to get his footing.

Craig felt hands reach up and tighten on his throat; empty hands. The gun was gone, but he knew that he could not fight for more than seconds against those hard, powerful hands. His own strength was ebbing out of him, fast now.

He heaved forward, and the man's back snapped against the rail, and slowly the hands loosened and then clawed wildly, cutting into Craig's cheeks. He heaved again, and the body left him and he heard the sudden splash as it hit the water.

He staggered back into the wheelhouse, reaching for the light switch and killing the engine. In the sudden brightness he saw Joan's face. She was holding young David close to her body.

"Take him below," he said. "Take him below."

He switched on the searchlight, swinging the beam around to light up the waters near the side of the boat. He stumbled back on deck, half on his knees, groping for the gun, finding it against the cabin housing.

In the bright gleam of the searchlight he could see the figure struggling in the water, trying with wild, inept strokes to swim. The man was a bad swimmer. Perhaps at first he had attempted to get out of the path of light, to reach the shore somewhere, but now, close as the beach was, he had turned and was fighting to make the end of the wharf.

Craig walked unsteadily forward. The bow of the *Arbutus* was wedged deep in the ripped planks of the wharf, and he stood there, watching the struggling figure in the water, waiting.

From up the inlet the riding lights of two boats were rapidly approaching. He was glad of that. He did not know how long he would be able to stand, how long he would be able to hold the gun.

Once the swimmer raised his head, and Craig saw Pete Hobson's face for the first time. It was a haggard, frightened face. And yet it was an ordinary face, too.

The man did not try to climb out of the water. He clung to one of the pilings, and he was there when the two boats came up to the wharf, and he let one of them take him aboard. Frank Wilson was in that boat, Craig realized dimly, and once he heard Wilson call: "Do you want someone to help you take your ship back, Craig?"

But he shook his head at that. He wanted to take her back himself, if the other boats would tow him loose from the wharf. He wanted to stand in the wheelhouse with Joan and little David Goliath Capilano very close to him, and that was how it happened in the end.

He kept thinking that he had a crippled bow, as well as a damaged propeller, to explain now. And a patrol still to make. There would be a lot of questions to answer; too many of them.

But they were close to him, the girl and the little Indian boy, standing there beside him in the wheelhouse. And he was certain of one thing. He wanted to tell Joan about it, if she did not already know.

He had ceased to be a lonely man. •



The illustration is a black and white line drawing with selective color. On the left, a man in a red jacket and dark trousers walks towards the right. In the background, there is a traditional Chinese gate with a tiled roof and a small car parked in front of it. The title 'South of the Clouds' is written in a large, stylized font at the top right.

South of the Clouds

By JAMES MERRIAM MOORE

Love, hate and treachery against the exotic background of war behind the lines in China. It was my job to learn who was friend and foe in this battle of the warlords for the control of a country.

I signalled to the plane towing my glider: "Cast off." Far below the peaks looked just as Chinese artists love to paint their mountains—bases hidden in morning mist, sides green-forested but streaked with black and orange and maroon. The mist still hid the lake and the small landing field on its shore in the bottom of this Yunnan valley that was now once more, after six years, the arena of my task. And now the question was whether our old ally, General Wang Cheung Tsung, still held his own in his Province South-of-the-Clouds; whether it would be he and his who waited for me down there, or whether it would be soldiers of Mao's Red forces.

The tow plane lifted free of me, banked and turned

back toward Indo-China and Hanoi. American insignia on its side flashed and faded. On my glider all markings had been painted out. The plane diminished to a silver scratch on the porcelain blue Yunnan sky.

I leveled my glide as much as the weight of the radio-jeep behind in the fuselage would allow, using updrafts from the ring of mountain slopes to circle while dawn mist shredded from the valley below. Soon the slate-blue waters of the lake would flash up through the fog; the lake with its garden-island of Hutai where Wang had his pleasant compound beside the Confucian Great Temple. On the lake shore at the end of the island's causeway I should see the grass-green level where I used to land—and must land now—between water and steep dense-wooded mountain slope. There used to be a crude sugar mill at the edge of the trees. And far to the east, high on a distant mountain tilted against the sky, would be Wang's grimmer stronghold of last resort, his fortress of Wenshan.

The Marshal Delanoy, French C-in-C, Indo-China, had briefed me in Hanoi last night, swiftly.

"Ah, you will be the American Major Ware?" He rose from behind a vast desk of some dull heavy wood; a wispy, tight-buttoned man, whose face wanted a lot of smoothing after months of ugly guerrilla war. "You are fortunate lend-lease to us, my Commandant. They have said you were American liaison officer with Wang's South Yunnan army before V-J Day." He turned to his aide who had presented me. "Map lights, please. Then leave us."

The operations map on the wall was curtained. When he pulled apart these hangings the steamy room air smelled suddenly of mildew and damp aromatic wood. I'd not expected to smell that odor again. Delanoy observed me a moment more before beginning. "You are rather young, but I think you have perhaps the calm that compensates. Women might be annoyed with you. But I am satisfied."

The situation was this:

General Wang Cheung Tsung had revolted from Mao's Red government. Mao sent a Red regiment south from Kunming to suppress him. Wang had a superior force of troops but no ammunition.

Reports were mostly rumor, for Viet Minh guerrillas stood between Hanoi and the Yunnan border, but it was said that Wang had cut the Red regiment's supply route by slides and blocks in the mountain passes.

Now a squadron of American cargo planes, loaded with ammunition and food, waited on the Hanoi airfield,

ready to drop supplies to Wang if contact could be made with him.

"Why the food?" I asked, "if it's the Reds who are hungry, and Wang only needs ammo?"

Delanoy was cynical. "In dealing with the East, my Commandant, food is like money in your Stork Club."

I nodded. "That's true."

My mission was to land in Wang's country, contact Wang, then call the air-drop.

"The American cargo planes are now under your command," Delanoy added. "You arrange radio code and hours direct with them."

"Have you any French agents in Yunnan?" I asked.

The Marshal drew the curtains across the map again before answering and again I smelled the rottenness of cloth and wood, the subtle deterioration of all those material barriers by which westerners seek to fend off nature in the tropic East.

"Eight days ago," he said carefully, "when first I asked your General Staff in Tokyo for these planes to foster Wang's revolt, a Captain Bloch flew north in a small plane without radio. On our Intelligence staff he was valuable: a French father, a native mother. He has not returned. I fear he is dead." . . .

Now, as I circled down within the ring of Yunnan mountain peaks, a blue hole opened in the silver false floor of mist and the lake gleamed up to meet me. Then the mist suddenly shredded away. There in the sun lay the island of Hutai. The massive Temple stood intact, four sumptuous arcs of roof-line sweeping out from its small cupola. But Wang's compound beside the Temple—those pleasant flower-sweet courts where once Wang used to plan attacks south against the Japs in Indo-China, the garden where his niece, T'ienli, was allowed to join us when she was home from the French convent school at Lianan—that compound was now a blackened ruin from which a single wisp of smoke still rose into the windless blue air as a cigarette burns out in an empty room.

And off to the east, from the steep slopes of Wenshan where Wang's final fortress lay, I heard distant poppings of rifle fire.

Below, though, the grassy landing ground at the causeway's end was clear. The last low circle I could manage before letting down showed one good sign: the mill among the trees on the mountain side of the field was peacefully busy. Its chimney smoked a little. Under the shed in front, through its door as I floated low, I saw gleams from the wet hide

of the buffalo turning the wooden crusher within. These should be Wang's people.

But my glide was finished. Whoever was down there, I had to land now. And now, until the heavy glider was on the ground, I had to keep my eyes on the field in front no matter what happened around me.

The glider settled with the dangerous feel of an elevator dropping. I shoved forward a bit on the stick, unwieldy now, and searched the uprising grass ahead for obstacles.

And suddenly, dark across that stretch of grass, fled the shadow of a plane. High and behind I heard for a moment the distant thrum of a single motor.

My wheels struck. The glider bounced heavily; lurched. The jeep at my back strained its lashings and held. Then the surge and thrust of the jeep's wheel joined the line of the wheel's roll.

Near the mill the glider came to a stop. Drawing my pistol from its shoulder holster, I got to the ground and walked warily to the mill.

The mill was empty. At the back a door opening into the woods of the mountain slope swung to and fro. But even the buffalo was gone.

Cautiously I backed away, toward the glider again. Men of the mill were probably Wang's people and I wanted news of Wang, but I wasn't going to chase them into that hillside. It's too easy for a strange foreigner to get killed trying to interfere with Chinese decisions, and they'd decided to clear out.

A last-moment decision, though. Stalks of cane still hung dripping between the wooden rollers of the crusher, buffalo dung smoked on the straw-littered floor, a gasoline can of new rum stood in front of the row of earthenware jars along the wall, ready to be poured into the jar with the lid off. What came over them during those last minutes while I was setting the glider down? Came over was right: there'd been that shadow of a plane.

I gave the sky a quick search. Nothing. But a small plane could duck down among the peaks and vanish. A small plane: maybe that Captain Bloch whom Delanoy sent ahead and who never came back. But Bloch was on Wang's side. Wang's people shouldn't evade him.

I was by the glider now. The thing to do was to get the jeep unloaded and ready to roll. Maybe the mill men would show and I could figure my next step.

I hoisted the glider's hinged nose, laid the ramp boards, ran out the jeep, and began checking it: the radio and packaged rations in the back, the

loaded carbine clipped to the dashboard. The windshield I left swung down over the hood. There might be shooting later and I didn't want glass shattering in my face.

My watch said 9 A.M.: three hours before the first daily radio-contact hour. In Hanoi we'd set that for noon to 1 P.M., 1200 to 1300, each day. There'd be time, if the mill men didn't show and give me news, to reconnoiter the burnt-out island of Hutai; a risky dead-end street across the causeway, but I had to know just what had happened on Hutai. The rifle fire that I had heard coming from the slopes of Wenshan outside the valley, eastward, seemed to prove that Wang had managed to escape the destruction of Hutai and now was holed up in his Wenshan fortress. If so, I was in for trouble, because the fort was too small to drop chutes into with ground fire keeping the drop-planes high. And how could I get through the Red siege lines to begin with?

But Wang was too astute a soldier to get himself shut up in Wenshan. Maybe the men who still held out there were only the remnants of his force. Maybe Wang was already dead in Hutai here—he and his niece, T'ienli. She would be a woman now; not the gentle, serious child any longer but a woman with the long limbs and pale gardenia skin of her Manchu ancestors who gave her also the right to the yellow girdle she wore over the sheath of green silk that replaced, at home in her uncle's house, the black western school-girl dress of the convent. Was she dead too? I had to find out.

The mill was still deserted. No use waiting here where the bulk of my glider might attract some wandering Red patrol. And to make a bonfire of it would be even more foolish. I got behind the wheel of the jeep and headed for the causeway and Hutai. Something had to break soon.

The break that came seemed entirely commonplace. It came from Hutai. At the far end of the causeway, under the covered gate in the mud wall that molded the island shore and enclosed Wang's blackened courts

and the massive untouched Temple, appeared a wedding party. Marriage and birth go on always in China, like death, and even through the war, weddings had safe-conduct. I could see the placid pony drawing the high, two-wheeled cart, a few men running beside, and, under the canopy of the cart, the gaudy robes and crown of the bride, tinsel and rose. I could even see the two round vivid dollars of rouge on the bride's cheeks under the beaded fringe of her crown.

Suddenly the men pointed, not at me and the jeep but at the mill behind me. They jerked the pony around, back under cover of the gate-tower. I looked over my shoulder. From the chimney of the mill rose a single puff of smoke, hanging like a shell-burst in the still air. And then ahead, clear to me and from the mill but hidden from the party under the island wall, a small plane skimmed over the lake and the island, lowering to land; a small plane with French army markings. That could be Bloch. I turned back toward the glider to give him a clear field.

The plane rolled up and stopped some twenty yards from my jeep. It was one of our L-4 cub types, pilot's seat in front, room for two at a pinch behind. The pilot in khaki looked European. Two native soldiers in blue, wadded jackets were crowded into the rear seat. As the pilot got out and walked toward me, the muzzle of a burp-gun poked out of the rear cockpit, covering us.

The pilot came smiling, though, holding out his hand. That quick first sight recalled Delaney's remark about mixed blood. There was a square Alsatian build, the reddish hair, fair skin, blue eyes, but the thick body gave no sense of heavy bones beneath. The man walked flexibly as though a western covering were mounted on slender bamboos. And on the enormous upper lip I missed the mustache that would have made it natural.

"I am Captain Bloch," he bowed and the bones in his handshake were elusive.

"Major Ware, United States Army," I introduced myself. "They're anx-

ious about you in Hanoi. Where is Wang?"

"Ah, there I have misfortune to report."

He needn't have said it so gracefully. Something hurt under my ribs. T'ienli too, I wanted to ask? But I kept casual. "Get into the jeep here and tell me about it"—he had begun eyeing the radio—"and make those buzzards in the plane take that gun off us. Who are they?"

He climbed into the front seat beside me, shouting something to his men, but the burp-gun muzzle stayed where it was. "They are two Annam soldiers I bring as guards," he explained. "Very ignorant."

"So Wang is dead?" I asked. "Tell me what you know."

He stared at his fat, incongruous knees a moment, then alerted. "No. No. Wang is not dead, but he was driven from Hutai here in bloody fighting before I arrive. 'Now he is besieged in his fortress, Wenshan.'"

THAT was something. And T'ienli could be alive too. "My planes can't lay a drop into Wenshan," I said. "Have you contact with any of Wang's people outside?" and I gave a surreptitious glance toward the mill.

Casualty Bloch put his pudgy legs over the side of the jeep and strolled around behind it, a little distance from me, examining the radio from a new angle. "What code will you use?" he inquired. "You have a code book?"

"The code," I called to him impatiently, "is entirely in my head." The carrier-squadron's signal officer was an old-timer too: we'd agreed on the CBI scheme—send in the clear but use American sports lingo. "Have you any plan at all? Come back here so we can talk. We can't fool around on this open field."

"But the code?" he persisted, still behind the jeep. "You must have notes of it!" He gave me an insinuating smile. "And certain hours for sending and receiving also!"

I'd saved my temper. This seemed to be the spot to use it. "God damn it, come back here and talk straight. How are we going to get ammo to Wang?"

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Slowly he came oack and climbed into the seat beside me again, sullen for a moment, then suddenly bright once more. "Yes. Certainly I have the plan. I have not been idle. The plan is this—" he considered a moment, then asked quickly. "There will be food in the drop as well as ammo? How marked?"

"Yes, there'll be food," I told him sharply. "Yellow chutes, food. Red chutes, ammo. What's your plan?"

"This is the plan, then. Beyond that lower first mountain"—he pointed east—"a few of Wang's men are hid outside Wenshan near a forgotten small airstrip. I am with them. Each night some slip through the Communist lines to speak with Wang. We shall call the drop on that airstrip—a very low drop at dusk so it will not be seen. Then, little by little, we shall smuggle the ammunition through to Wang in Wenshan fortress until he has enough to attack."

It sounded plausible—perhaps our only way—but I saw flaws. And, more disturbing, I sensed too many small irrelevant things wrong in a country where irrelevances can be the keys to an affair. It's right when you see DiMaggio walk up to the plate: wrong when you see him go to bat with a tennis racket. "What about—" I began to cross-examine. If Bloch, a trained Intelligence officer, had contact with Wang's people, why didn't he know about the mill men, even if he hadn't seen the smoke signal as he was landing? And maybe about the wedding party no doubt watching us now from Hutai as we sat out here in the open. But I thought I'd give him another chance to clear things up: the Eurasian mind doesn't work like ours. "What about," I corrected myself, "this field here for the drop? I don't recall any strip near Wenshan; must be new. Too close to the Red lines anyway. Safer here even if it makes a longer carry. Yunnan coolies are good porters. How many of them have you?"

One of Bloch's soldiers in the plane scolded out some impatient spitting words at him, and the muzzle of the burp-gun wagged at us again. Bloch interrupted me, yessing me thoroughly. "Very good. Much better here. Surely there will be enough porters. So let us not delay here. Communist patrols might come. I fly back my plane to advise these friends of Wang. You follow with this radio-jeep: I leave one of my soldiers to guide you." And suddenly he jumped out and hurried toward his plane, walking with those unsuitable undulant strides again.

Startled, I went after him. There was a lot more to ask. But before I reached the plane he had one soldier

with the burp-gun out of it and he himself was in the pilot's cockpit.

"See here," I said coming up. "Don't take chances. Can't the Reds on Wenshan see you coming into this eastward airstrip of yours in full daylight?"

He waved me off gaily. "Behind the mountain? No." He started his motor. The noise and slip-stream drowned my voice. The plane began to trundle downwind.

I thought he would turn for the take-off, but instead the motor howled and the tail lifted in a long skim to the end of the open grass and the rim of trees. At the last moment the fat little bug of a ship rose over the trees, became a dragonfly, then a dart aimed at one blue gap in the northern arc of peaks: a hasty downwind take-off. But then, I thought, the sultry air was so still it didn't matter much. We should have storms before dark if I remembered the Yunnan weather signs right.

I walked back to my jeep, dissatisfied.

The guard with the burp-gun was already there squatting in the back, the gun beside him, tearing at a ration package, stuffing food in his mouth, not stopping to chew but spitting out the hard pieces. I had no Annam dialect but moved in on him, damning in French. He grabbed his gun and held me off.

We weren't going to be friends at all. With a show of leisure I sat down on the grass where I could watch both him and the mill. My French wasn't doing any good, not even getting answers. He just went on bolting and spitting. Then I tried my Yunnan Chinese: "Bloch Sang-weh's will be very angry unless we start at once and cease behaving like a village dog."

I couldn't tell whether he understood or was just full for the moment, but anyway he wiped his hands on his jacket and went around to the front seat of the jeep. It was going to be a smelly ride with him beside me. I stood up. Then I saw that it was my canteen he wanted in the front seat. He unscrewed the top, took a swig, and spit the water out, screeching at me for *jiao*. *Jing-bao*, I guessed he meant: liquor after that big feed.

Well, the mill was full of it, didn't he know? I pointed. He understood the gesture anyway, for he made me a sign to stay where I was, and he backed toward the mill; in under the shed, in through the door. I lost sight of him.

He could probably see me though, so I sat still. I heard a sort of clang, which could be the sides of the gasoline can of new rum straightening when it was lifted by its grass handle. Then he must have dropped it and stumbled against the tier of jars, for

I heard a smash of earthenware. I waited but he didn't come out. And there was no more noise.

Minutes went by. I'd better see to this. I'd sent the fellow into the mill with an idea he might flush someone out of it, but he seemed to have joined in the disappearing act instead. Rolling over on my side as though to stretch out for a nap, and with my back to the mill, I slipped the pistol from my shoulder holster into one of the side-pockets of my bush-jacket; then thought better of the nap and got to my feet in a bored sort of way, stuck my hands in my jacket pockets, and strolled toward the mill. Cautiously I entered, calling out again that I was ready to go with him on our journey.

I wasn't ready to go with him on the journey he'd taken, though. He lay beside the tier of jars. Rum and blood still trickled in the straw, and the smell of both was strong. His head was at a wrong angle. One tremendous, neatly drawn blow had cut windpipe and artery, draining him silently there in the yellow chaff.

His burp-gun and bandoliers of ammunition were gone. One lone clip lay under his foot. I picked it up and got out of the mill. By my jeep I wiped off the clip and looked for an ordnance mark. The mark was Russian.

Well, that explained where Bloch stood—his glib talk, his disjointed actions. It showed me where I'd stood too. If I'd had a radio code book I'd be lying here full of burp-gun slugs now. Bloch set up that simple ending, edging behind the jeep while the guards in the plane covered me, waiting for his signal. But when he found the code was all in my head he saw I was necessary.

Or if Delanoy had let the planes be loaded only with the ammo Wang needed, and not with food too, the burp-gun would still have got me. Delanoy's rumor had been right: Wang really had cut the Red regiment's supply route. Like their dead guard, they were half starved. First-rate officer, Delanoy. When he couldn't see forward he looked back and experience paid off. Now Bloch, and the people who bought him or forced him, had to have me and my radio to call down manna from heaven for them.

Of course, when my guard and I didn't show up with the jeep at their base under Wenshan they would be back to hunt me, but not before late afternoon: ten o'clock now and a good six hours marching from Wenshan, for they would send a patrol over the road this time to make sure of me. The plane could come back to help look any time. I'd better

move off this open ground. And I'd better use the time before the chase began to find some of Wang's people.

I'd been cleaning off the dead guard's clip, putting it in my pocket: one of those petty, instinctive hoardings that come to be the Sherlock Holmes weakness in an Intelligence-trained officer's mind. Now I tossed it away. The only people to whom it would mean a thing were Wang and Delaney. Wang was cut off from me in Wenshan. I'd be running into certain trouble if I headed that way now. Delaney—I wasn't very sure when or whether I'd be seeing him again.

No use trying the mill again. Those men had probably skipped for good after killing my guard, else they should have made some move. But there was still the wedding party that turned back into Hutai when the smoke signalled Bloch's plane.

Something, I felt, was not right about Hutai, a ruin except for the Temple. Bloch said Wang had defended that island and been pushed out, driven into Wenshan. Did Wang cut his way out across the causeway; only the old longwords and huts of empty rifles against Red small-arms and mortar fire. There were other flaws in Bloch's tale too.

I started the jeep.

At the beginning of the causeway, where green shore reeds still fringed it, I stopped. A shallow ditch had been dug across the hard surface of the road and a corduroy of bamboos laid to bridge it, fore and aft. It couldn't be a booby trap because the wedding cart must have passed over a little while before on its way to the Temple. I got out and tested the bamboos, turning a few. They could be sawn underneath and the wedding cart was light. But they were solid, and I drove across gingerly lest the poles give sideways and let my wheels down between. That was evidently the idea: to delay heavy motors coming fast.

There was no other obstacle before the gate in the island wall. The gate itself stood open and deserted. I drove through the patch of shade under the low tower; through to sun again and the area of Wang's compound.

It was a sad return. Walls were crumbled. Charred roof beams still marked the edges of each court as though a vindictive painter had drawn black brush strokes suddenly over a picture and memory of pleasant days. In T'ienli's special court, flowers and grass were brown, privacy was gone, the masonry of the pool was cracked, and on the yellow dust of its bottom dry crinkles of lotus stems made a pattern of many small deaths.

Wang and I had sat in that court when it was green and cool and water

TWIST OF FATE



THE BROKEN BOTTLE

■ Inventions are fascinating. Many, the result of long and painstaking research and experimentation, are counterbalanced by those which seem to be pure accident. But in the latter instance, if the alert eye is not there to catch the significance of the happenstance—no invention is given to a waiting world.

One example occurred in the laboratory of the French scientist, Edouard Benedictus: Laboriously following a theory in his laboratory, he accidentally dropped a bottle. Stooping to retrieve the shattered glass fragments he was amazed to find that there weren't any. Just the bottle, still intact, its surface covered with a network of tiny, hair-like cracks.

The scientist picked it up, replaced it on the shelf. But during the ensuing days he pondered the phenomenon. Eventually he remembered that some years before that bottle had contained an experimental mixture. His files gave the contents: Ether, amyl, acetone, alcohol, trinitro-cellulose. The chemicals had evaporated, long since, leaving but a thin coating inside that bottle. The glass, when the bottle crashed, had shattered. But this inner coating must have held the fragments together! So much for that; with a typical Latin shrug he dismissed the thing. He had important chemical experiments under way. The enigma was solved; on with the current work!

Until Edouard Benedictus recalled that bottle puzzle in rather a horrifying way. Vacationing on the French Riviera he witnessed an automobile crash, and one of the victims was a lovely young woman whose fate was disfigured by fragments of flying glass. In that single instant the significance of the forgotten bottle penetrated his mind. Stopping his vacation M. Benedictus returned to his laboratory, pushed aside all other experiments to work on this vitally important project—and from that labor we have safety glass.

—Mary Alkus

lapped the smooth moss on colored stones; when Wang laid aside khaki for comfortable silk and meditated affairs of state in bronze dignity, looking beyond me with eyes of black oiled stone that confided in no one—"old rock-eyes," the American soldiers of my signal detail used to call him to each other. And while Wang meditated T'ienli would talk to me, sometimes in Chinese to help me with her language, sometimes in dutiful convent French, and then more and more in the English that grew between us: a serious child, old for her years, though flowers have no age, only bud and bloom and withering. The bloom would have come now. But even then, through those vivid, contrasting interludes between excursions from this garden into bleak mountain war and back again, she was my friend, and never foreign to me. It had been hard to go home at last. And at home sun-tanned girls chattered. I'd put in for Japan finally; the assignment that ended so suddenly three days ago when I was sent to Delaney out of Korea.

But now in these ruins I sensed two things with quick elation. The walls that still stood were cracked and blackened but not scarred. There were no pits of mortar shells. I sniffed the still air. The scent of burning was acrid yet, but with it came no sweet profane odor of death. You know that smell. You never for-

get nor fail to sense it. But here no bodies lay under the charred roof beams. There had been no battle on Hutai.

I made for the Temple compound now. Its walls were smoke-singed but intact. Here, too, the gate was open. I drove the jeep under its shade and walked through into a garden that was still green. Behind me, and on each side, the court was closed by penthouse sheds along the compound walls, but beyond the garden's farther end mounted the Temple's terrace, balustraded in gray stone with little sculptured animals on each post. At the head of broad steps dividing the balustrade stood the great incense burner of filigree bronze, and behind the terrace, barred only by immense columns, carved and red with the dullness of dried blood, rose the Temple itself, massive as a buffalo, delicately patterned as a moth. Under the columns the gloom was noted with glints from the gold characters on the semicircle of chairs within, symbolic chairs of Confucius and his Disciples. There were no idols in his Temple.

Then, through the filigree of the incense burner on the terrace, I caught another gleam—bright colors. I went across the garden and up the terrace steps.

Behind the burner knelt the bride of the morning. The fringed veil of her crown hid her face, but as I stood beside her I heard the grave voice

that I knew now had never really been silent in my mind.

"I am no bride, Wei-erh, but we had to see who had been sent to us. I am glad it is you."

And from the dark of the Temple came another remembered voice.

"Once again in harsh times, Wei-erh *Sasha*, I rejoice at your presence."

T'ienli would not yet let me see her face still disguised by paint and tinsel. Head bowed under the gaudy, fringed bride crown she walked beside me into the Temple dusk; then, when her uncle met us, she slipped away through the wall-hangings behind one of the great chairs.

Wang wore his priest's robes well. He was always parcel of the three ultimate professions: priest, judge, and soldier. Now he became soldier again as I told him of the waiting planes at Hanoi and what had happened between Bloch and me. We sat in the red-and-gold chairs of the Disciples—Chinese lay no special sanctity on material things—and the solemn gloom seemed a darkened theater where six years were passing with a few stage-directions. When we went out into the sun again, a new but consecutive act simply would begin.

"I don't think Bloch planned treason when he flew in," I tried to be fair. "It looks more as though Mao's men caught him and are forcing him. The guards covered him too, and one stayed with him."

Wang gestured that away. "To us the matter is that he will return soon with a Communist patrol. We have dealt with one guard in the mill. You played your part well then, Wei-erh. We watched you from Temple roof. And you understood to come here after you saw the wedding cart, not wasting time with the mill. But until bullets arrive we cannot fight. This patrol must not make investigation of Hutai."

"Why not?" I didn't understand. "There must be places the few of us can hide here even if the patrol does come searching across the causeway for me. They don't suspect you're here. Your compound is burned and they believe you're in Wenshan with your troops. They're now besieging Wenshan."

I was watching his hands, folded, seeming at rest in his lap. I had learned long ago that his eyes and face never told anything. Now, automatically, he pulled the sleeves of his robe across those sleek, grasping fingers.

"As Mao's regiment approached," he told me patiently, "I burn my compound to deceive. The Temple, of course, I was understood to respect although they would not. Then I send a few men with our only bullets into Wenshan for making time. But



"Fd better hang up, Barbara. Looks as if Tom has come home in another one of his moods."

the most of my troops—without bullets yet to fight—are here. This armed patrol must not come across to Hutai.”

“Here—on Hutai?” I still didn’t understand. “Where have you hid them?”

Wang sniffed and shrugged. I was supposed to take his word on facts. He had small patience with step-by-step minds.

T’ienli rejoined us then. The bride’s crown and peasant finery were gone. So were the two crude blobs of rouge from the petals of her cheeks. A little shyly, she let me see her face. She wore the colors I best recalled: green sheath and yellow girdle. Once I’d called those her jonquil costume, and severely she’d instructed me that each dress a woman wore was meant, of course, to suggest some flower. Now Wang let her explain what he had just told me.

“Do you remember, Wei-erh,” she asked quietly, “that twice, while you were with us before, you came to this Temple with your camera to explore? Once my uncle followed and invited you to drink tea and smoke with him instead. Another time he sent me. He saw no reason then for you to learn of the vaults and passages under the Temple. My uncle feels that now you might recall how we drew you away; that you might realize there are secrets here and be not so astonished.”

Wang was staring beyond us into the sunny garden. “Soon it will be noon,” he remarked, “the hour, you say, for radio calling. Let us consider making signal.”

“Sorry to be dense again,” I tried to focus his words. I’d not imagined T’ienli would take all mind and breath. “But I have to get the facts straight. You’ve got your men hidden in this ant-hill of a Temple? Are you strong enough to whip Mao’s regiment if you had the ammo?”

“Ah,” Wang brushed one hand from his sleeve, chopping with the edge of it. “With bullets destroying is certain. The Communist regiment also has bodily weakness: they starve. I have blocked the passes from Kunming.”

“When the Reds came, our families hid their rice before leaving the valley,” T’ienli put in quickly. “Here on Hutai we have rice and men, but no bullets for empty rifles. Wei-erh. We have only the old longwords.”

“Very well,” I decided. “I’ll call the drop for daylight, plus two hours tomorrow. The planes will have to see to locate. Your ammo will be with the red chutes. Where do you want the drop?”

“Here. On field by mill.”

“But the Reds may see the drop from Wenshan,” I argued. “How

about the strip at Linan to the westward?”

“My men seize at once, being close. After I have bullets it does not matter what Mao’s men have seen. After that it will be cat-cat, tiger-tiger: *mao-mao, ju-fu.*”

I bowed to the pun and the proverb—Wang prided himself on such—and to the simplest plan. A drop farther west would have meant a long, vulnerable night march for his unarmed men. And some desertions, maybe. I got up, looking at my watch. “OK. I can get the message off now.”

But Wang sat still, making some more dissatisfied snuffling sounds, waiting for something else. Somehow the crude noises that he used for words at one moment never spoiled his dignity in the next.

“All right,” I said after enough silence to give Wang a dose of his own medicine of reticence. “If it’s necessary, I’ll explain, before I send the message, how I intend to keep Bloch’s patrol from searching Hutai for me. Of course, your men mustn’t be caught in here without ammo.”

Wang stopped sniffing and looked up politely, so I knew my reproof had reached him. To prolong it a moment, I fell into the formal Yunnan idiom. “The plan is this, and this is the plan: The patrol will be marching,” T’ienli stirred. Wang only nodded. “Your watchers will report their approach on the road along the lake from Wenshan and through the woods around the landing-field here.” Wang nodded again. “I’ll be waiting on the field in my jeep. They’ll see me. But before they come too close I’ll drive off—westward. I’ll draw them away from Hutai—all night. They’ll see my lights—you can’t drive blind on Yunnan roads—now and then I’ll pretend to break down—” T’ienli started to speak but her uncle checked her with a gesture and I assured her: “It’s quite safe. They have to have both me and my radio, so they won’t shoot. But they will follow. I’ll get them away from Hutai.”

Again T’ienli stirred and looked to her uncle. But Wang rose, approving.

“The plan is good, Wei-erh. It is a good plan.” He glanced sternly at T’ienli. “No matter how the patrol comes, *jeepu* can always keep ahead. But I think now we must act with great speed.” And suddenly he ordered his niece: “Go to the roof-pagoda—” I remembered very well the cupola of the Temple; it had been an OP and the place where we strung our aerial—and make certain the radio wire still runs down unbroken to the court.” When she hesitated he smacked one fist into the other open palm. She went obediently, then, through the hangings behind the chairs.

As Wang and I walked through the court toward my jeep I thought I understood the reason of T’ienli’s hesitance; one point I hadn’t covered.

“When Bloch’s patrol sees me escaping,” I remarked, “they’ll wonder about the guard they left with me. Why not get rid of his body before they come? Otherwise they may get curious about the mill and Hutai, too, instead of chasing me.”

Wang sniffed. “Do you think I become too old for war, Wei-erh? There is no body in the mill now; no trace.”

I still didn’t understand what was worrying T’ienli. Nor why Wang was in such haste, and so anxious to have T’ienli away. We had a clear hour to get the message out and several more before a patrol could come.

Wang led me across the Temple court, his face placid still, but his hands concealed and his steps short and urgent. The jeep I’d left just inside the Temple gate, under the penthouse shed that ran around three sides of the compound wall, at the spot which used to be our signal station. A strand of old wire, the end of the aerial, still dangled there. I scraped the wire’s end and connected it. Wang watched, aloof as always from mechanical contrivances: the servants of foreigners. His only interest was in their accomplishments.

“I should trace the aerial line,” I said. “T’ienli has been gone some time. I know the way—to the roof of the Temple at least. You needn’t bother to come.” Wang had always let me deal alone with the delays and impertinences of my alien gadgets.

BUT now Wang followed me; back across the court and terrace, through the hangings behind the chairs, and up the dark narrow stair to the small pagoda perched on the apex of the stylized roof-mountain.

T’ienli was urging speed on a tremendous man. I’d noticed that tallness in the escorts of the wedding cart. On his back, slung like a rifle, was one of the ancient longwords—just the sort of weapon that in other accustomed hands had settled my guard at the mill. This man was patiently and awkwardly tying together two ends of wire. I took them from him and made a sure Western Union splice. Then I looked over the cupola’s rail to check our old aerial; coils of wire looped between the small wooden figures of birds and dogs and monkeys spaced along each curved sweep of the four corner beams of the Temple roof to keep devils from perching. As aerial pegs they weren’t out of character now.

I had forgotten how much one could see from the roof here: the green landing-field on the northern lake shore

beyond the causeway; the mill at its far edge, and then the mountain slope rising in darker jungle green; good cover for the mill crew, even cover enough for all of Wang's troops. On each side of the landing-field wide bands of enclosing woods flowed down from the mountain to lake. The only clear approach for a plane was over the water. Through the western band of forest ran the road to Linan and through the eastern band wound the track to Wenshan, coming out of the trees finally to edge away from the mountains and follow the shore line across cultivated fields to the eastern end of the lake. There it turned sharp inland, and I lost it in the trees of the valley's inner boundary ridge. I remembered how it crossed that first ridge and the ravine beyond before it began to mount the vast slope of Wenshan mountain. Now heavy clouds, rushing from the north, were covering Wenshan, and over Hutai here the gold noon sun was silvering.

Wang touched my arm. "Make haste, Wei-erh."

"Lots of time," I assured him, and T'ienli said quickly, "That is the only parting of the line." So we went down again to the jeep. The long-sword man stayed in the roof-pagoda.

It was nearly one o'clock when I gained contact with my squadron at Hanoi and got the message off, paraphrasing the meaning of the words to Wang and T'ienli as I sent:

"We are playing football"—that meant real business, not tennis nor golf. "Kick-off next sunup plus two"—that would allow time for any morning mist to clear. "On Soldiers' Field"—that meant a drop over the landing-field by the mill. Rose Bowl would have meant the other possibility over at Linan to the west. "OK? Over."

"Good." Wang seemed relieved to have the message off. "Good. And now—"

"Now I have to wait for acknowledgment."

Such western ritual fretted him. "Do not delay long," he admonished, and told T'ienli, "Call me quickly when acknowledgment come." Then he went through a door in the gate-tower. We heard his clogs clack on stone steps, downward. In the interval his troops were going to get the good news.

"How long before this signal in return, Wei-erh?" T'ienli asked anxiously.

"Not too long—as soon as the picture's clear to them—when they're sure they have no questions. Why? What's all the hurry? We've hours before the patrol comes."

But she wouldn't answer directly. "Do you remember, Wei-erh, when you used to return from some excursion

of war you would make from the landing-field a certain sign to us watching on the Temple roof—a sign that all was well?" She reminisced now, almost wistfully, yet there was no leisure of reminiscence in the quick pace of her words.

"Yes, I remember." I tapped the crown of my head with my fist—the old open-cockpit pilot's sign to his mate behind him, "I have the controls."

"Then if—when you go out soon to draw this Red patrol away from Hutai—if all seems well, make that sign before you drive from the field. But if you find yourself in danger, Wei-erh, then—"

"What then?" I asked. "Your uncle's men with empty rifles couldn't help much."

"Still, we make attempt at rescue," she said. "There are always the old longwords. Promise this, Wei-erh." She stood close to me. A western girl would have raised her face to ask. T'ienli's head bowed submissively, almost against my shoulder.

Then across the court the tall man rushed out on the Temple terrace, shrilling a wasp-swarm of words. I heard Wang's clogs clattering up the hidden stairs from the passages below.

"Promise, Wei-erh, please promise quickly," begged T'ienli.

"Yes, of course," and I clamped down my ear-phones again. Why didn't the signal come? Wang ran out of the gate-tower door, crackling questions at the tall man. "Quiet. Wait." I begged. But I had to take off the ear-phones and listen to him.

To me Wang spoke almost humbly. "Now the Red patrol comes. Two motor lorries along the lake-shore track from Wenshan. "But—" he watched my face anxiously—"they have not yet reached the woods that screen the field. You may still get there before they arrive. And jeep is faster than lorry."

"Lorries?" I turned on him. "Trucks—what do you mean trucks? If the Reds have no food, they've no gas either."

But I knew it must be true. That was why Bloch and his gang had come back so fast—why Wang had hurried me—why T'ienli was distressed in her obedience.

"Charcoal-burning lorries, Wei-erh," she whispered. "What will you do now?" In her way, she had tried to warn me as far as obedience allowed. And Wang wouldn't let her. I jerked loose the aerial wire, then slid behind the jeep's wheel.

"I'll go out, of course. Hanoi must have my message. And we've got to keep this patrol from checking here. The jeep can keep ahead of trucks." Then I turned on Wang, very formal-

ly. "Why did you not tell of the charcoal-lorries, Wang Cheung Tsung, when I spoke of a foot patrol?"

He stood beside me, meekly, the thin black hair on the top of his bent head showing like dark weathering on bronze. "I neglect to say lest you hesitate to signal air-drop for here close at hand." And for the first time in our relations together he explained a little. "You are always too reckless in act but too cautious in plan, Wei-erh. Knowing of lorries, you might fear swift intercept of drop when seen from Wenshan. But Linan would be too far. Many of my men, marching there in darkness, would run away."

OLD STONE-EYES! Never to tell all he knew, always to spend truth profitably, coin by coin. I gunned my motor, but he held me one more second, throwing back his head this time and looking me straight in the eye.

"If you feel betrayed, stay here. I and my men will make attempt to lead them off."

He meant that. You had to forgive—you had to like him. But it would have been slaughter. And the failure of my mission.

I threw in my gears, and heard them each call after me.

Wang: "Let jeep fly fast."

T'ienli: "Remember the sign now, Wei-erh."

It was a race to be on the field and waiting when the Red lorries came out of the woods. Indeed I let jeep fly fast, bucketing over blackened beams of Wang's compound, and through the causeway gate. Out on the causeway the noise of motors sounded plainly. But they were not in sight so far. I'd be waiting for them.

Now overhead the sky was dulling fast from blue and gold to slate gray. The sun was gone except where patches of light blew through tumbling clouds and swam across the mountain sides like silvery schools of fish. Rain on clay roads, and my four-wheel drive would help to out-distance trucks. I speeded across the causeway.

Only when I was on it I remembered the bamboo-covered ditch at the shore end. The thrust of my speed forced two bamboos apart under a front wheel and the stopping jolt threw my stomach hard against the instrument panel. A rear wheel fell through too. The noise of the Red motors was loud on the wind now. I shoved back into the seat and threw the gears into low. The jeep climbed out; ran onto the landing-field.

And then, as I slewed around to face west toward Linan for my getaway, the jeep went out of control, arcing in wide crazy curves. Under

the front wheels something clattered and bumped.

I braked to a stop as the Red trucks roared out of the eastern woods.

The trucks, two of them, rolled toward me. I saw the Red star on the leading one, and beside the driver's brown face, Bloch's white one. Behind, in the body, a tight-standing mass of blue, wadded coats swayed and screeched, and above their heads at the rear end the charcoal-burner stacked up like a battered Sears-Roebuck water-heater. Then the second truck swung out of line. They were going to put the jeep between them.

Typical maneuver: to make sure of covering me they would cover themselves too and think nothing of spraying each other with their ill-aimed burp-guns.

For a second I saw myself jumping out and running for it. I didn't think they'd shoot; they needed me too much. They'd soon catch me, though, knock me down in that lush green grass that hurrying gusts of mountain wind now creased like cat's fur. Seeing me down, T'ienli might get Wang to try a rescue, and Wang's men would be shot down crossing the causeway and the Hutai show would be given away. Suddenly I was tired with the fatigue that makes men stop swimming the noisy, spray-confused crest of war and sink to the quiet bottom of it. Not yet, though. Wait and see. Wait and try.

And then a new plan blew across my mind like another gust of the keen gray wind over the grass. If I seemed ready to go with these Reds I could still get them away from Hutai. I'd play along and Wang could bail me out when he got his ammo and attacked tomorrow. Now if only Wang's men would stay hidden; not charge out in some forlorn hope of rescue here. Wang would surely wait a bit. But T'ienli might not—unless I signalled her.

I stood up in the jeep, tapping the top of my head with my clenched fist, making the signal that I was safe; that I had the controls again. And to explain the gesture I shouted to Bloch, "Here I am. It's I. Don't shoot." Panicky fear, but I thought he'd understand that.

The trucks stopped on my flanks. Bloch jumped out and ran toward me. I called again to him promptly, making my next gambit—with the dead pawn.

"Did you bring the bolts and pins?" I asked, and pointed under my front wheels.

He halted, noticing that something had broken, but his mind had to catch up. "What bolts and pins?"

"I sent that guide of yours after them hours ago. The jeep must have

been damaged in landing." I didn't want him to imagine I'd been off the field.

He believed me enough to shout something to the trucks. Then, he came toward me again, his heavy, frail-boned shoulders stiffened warily. He'd know I couldn't miss the red stars on the trucks, and that his fiction of playing on Wang's side was done. But there was no shame in his face—just malice for being caught. He'd turn cruel if I called him names.

I spoke casually. "I know when I'm caught. So get me some baling-wire from your lorries"—there was some in the tool-box of the jeep, of course; standard equipment for Yunnan motorists, but he mightn't think of that—"and we'll get going. How much will your Red colonel pay me to call the air-drop for him? Delaney said he needed food. How much did he pay you to turn your coat?"

"Nothing," Bloch whispered for he was close now. "Nothing, I swear it. I am forced also." I knew he lied, and didn't bother to answer.

They brought the wire, a Red soldier carrying it, a Red lieutenant strolling beside him. And the lieutenant shoved Bloch away from me. If they didn't trust him, that was worth remembering. Maybe Bloch didn't lie, after all.

The lieutenant was really glad to get me. His alternative must have been pretty drastic. He took my pistol, of course, my watch and fountain pen as well, but he offered help with the repairs. I couldn't make much of his northern dialect though, and the helpers stunk so I pushed them away. I wanted to make as solid a job as I could with baling-wire for the awful Yunnan roads ahead—and for any chance that might come for a getaway. While I lay between the front wheels working, the soldiers squalled and scuffled over the rations in the back of the jeep. But no one touched the carbine clipped to the dash board. The jeep would be their colonel's share of the loot and the carbine went with it.

I hurried the wiring job all I could. T'ienli and Wang would be watching. I was fairly sure they wouldn't try a rescue here after my "all well" signal. Even though she didn't understand, T'ienli would let a man run his own show. But Wang was such an awful gambler. Usually he foresaw all the angles but when he couldn't see any he gambled—old Stone-eyes.

Luckily the rod wasn't bent. The wire, doubled, made a fairly reliable pin, and we were ready to start. They backed one truck to the jeep and fastened a long tow rope. "If you start

CASE OF THE GROUNDED GOOSE

■ Do you believe the wild goose is the smartest and best organized of all the game birds? That is Captain Amos L. Horst's belief after witnessing two wild geese turn back from their spring migration and seek to lift a cripple from the water.

As executive secretary of the Wildlife Restoration Foundation, which maintains a game-bird refuge off Long Island Sound, New York, Captain Horst has a particular interest in migratory geese because a growing flock has been stopping at the Foundation refuge every winter since 1947. Last year he saw 114 fly in in December and remain until the third week in March.

Then, sensing the approach of spring, the geese began to take to the air, form their Vs and fly, honking, northward to eastern Canada. Departing in flocks of 40 a day, they were almost all gone a couple of days later.

Watching the last flock take wing and leave, Captain Horst noticed that one goose had been left behind in the water. By its prolonged futile efforts to rise he perceived that one wing evidently had been broken during the winter. But the lone goose had been missed, and in a matter of minutes two geese from the flock overhead returned to the disabled bird. They swam close on either side of the cripple, and then all three skittered across the surface of the water, the two helpers beating their wings strongly in an effort to lift the disabled one between them. This maneuver was tried twice, but a goose weighs fifteen pounds or more, and it failed both times. Accepting the facts, the two helpers honked farewell and flew to join the flock vanishing in the distance.

◇

WHO WERE THE GENERALS?

Here are the nicknames of famous American generals. Do you know their real names?

1. "Stonewall." Got this name at the Battle of First Bull Run (Manassas), later accidentally shot by his own men at battle of Chancellorsville and died of pneumonia days later.
2. "Fuss and Feathers." General in the Mexican War, led an expedition from Veracruz to Mexico City, retired shortly after the start of the Civil War.
3. "Old Bory." Commanded the Confederate forces that bombarded Ft. Sumter at start of the Civil War, also second in command at First Bull Run (Manassas).
4. "Stonewall Jackson of the West." He fought with the speed and daring of "Stonewall" Jackson and therefore gained the above title in his western campaigns during the Civil War.
5. "Old Hickory." Hero of the Battle of New Orleans in War of 1812 and later 7th president of the U.S.
6. "Unconditional Surrender." Yankee General, captured Vicksburg, received Lee's surrender at Appomattox, became the 18th president of U.S.
7. "Rock of Chickamauga." Yankee General, he got this name at the Battle of Chickamauga for his firmness during the engagement, although the Yankees withdrew, he is credited with the orderly withdrawal.
8. "Old Rough and Ready." General in Mexican War, won the Battle of Buena Vista, was 12th president of the U.S.
9. "Swamp Fox." American Revolutionary War General in the Southern colonies who harassed British troops with his guerrilla tactics.
10. "The Pathfinder." Yankee General in Civil War, first nominee of the Republican Party in 1856, was in California during "Bear Flag War" and Mexican War, led expeditions through the West as a surveyor.
11. "The Raven." Defeated Santa Anna at the Battle of San Jacinto during the Texas Revolution.
12. "The Marquis." Young French nobleman who came to America during the American Revolution, became a General in the American Army.

—Francis G. LaRose, Jr.

ANSWERS

1. General Thomas J. Jackson
2. General Winfield Scott
3. General P. G. T. Beauregard
4. General Patrick Cleburne
5. General Andrew Jackson
6. General Ulysses S. Grant
7. General George H. Thomas
8. General Zachary Taylor
9. General Francis Marion
10. General John C. Fremont
11. General Samuel Houston
12. General Lafayette

your motor they will punish," Bloch translated.

"Damn. Ride with me?" I suggested. "We'll talk."

Just as I thought, he had to put it to the lieutenant, and the answer was a burst of abuse that sent him scrambling into the tow truck: not a nice spectacle of lost face, but it showed Bloch's status with them.

The charcoal-gas motors coughed awhile, then started. One truck towed me, and the other, with the lieutenant, followed. Now, as we left the field and headed for Wenshan, I wanted to make sure I wasn't playing my hand for nothing, and that Wang didn't give himself away.

The clouds began to spit gray rain. Ostentatiously I looked up at the sky, pulled off my cap, and reached behind me into the back of the jeep, pushing aside the smelly legs of the guard they had loaded there, until I found my helmet. Then, putting the helmet on my head, and as though to settle it, I struck its crown with my fist. It was the only thing to do: our plan still marched; the patrol was leaving Hutai with no suspicions. If all went well and the drop came tomorrow—acknowledged or not, Hanoi had the message—Wang could rescue me when he hit the Red regiment around Wenshan. I hoped he'd have the same idea. And that I'd still be salvageable.

On the eastern edge of the field our road entered the woods, a herd of trees trailing down from the mountain forest to the lake.

I knew this route to Wenshan well. Soon we would come out of the woods and follow the shore of the lake in the open for several miles until the road turned inland, up and over a barrier ridge that separated Hutai valley from the steep ascent of Wenshan itself.

In the wood, branches began to relax the rain on us, the clay under our wheels wetted, and the jeep towed in a series of jerks and slides that kept me busy steering and braking. I couldn't afford to smash into the tow truck, or risk cracking up the jeep radio.

Then we cleared the wood and the rain became a transparent curtain of silver. Across the open ground narrow scrolls of farmed earth unrolled from the hills, scrolls edged by the rock and bush of water courses and broken by spade and mattock to infinite small clouds like close lines of Chinese characters recording long patience and poverty. Now these fields were deserted.

The road became a ribbon of smooth mud through the clouds, and the jeep slithered on its tow rope. We pulled safely out of one muddy swale. Then I heard shouts behind. The tow truck stopped and my bumper

slid against it, jarring ashes and cinders from the charcoal-burner bolted behind its tailboard. I looked back. The rear truck had bogged.

The soldiers in it, screamed at by the lieutenant, dropped themselves wearily down into the mud to push, but there wasn't much weight in their heave. They seemed to lean rather than shove. The rations they had salvaged from the jeep hadn't been enough to go around. Bloch, from the front truck, slopped by and began to talk to the lieutenant, pointing at my jeep, and presently they came to me. To regain a little face, Bloch had told about the jeep's four-wheel drive. I was to try pulling the stalled truck onto firmer ground.

The tow rope was changed, the soldiers stood by, vacant-faced but obedient, and I shifted gears. The lieutenant leaned into the jeep, gravely testing the meshing of the levers as though he knew something about them. That was face for him. Then he motioned permission to start my engine. I thought of making a break. But the trucks blocked me in front and behind; the soggy broken fields were on one side and the lake on the other.

I managed to pull the rear truck onto firmer ground. Again they roped the jeep to the leading truck while the men in the mud slowly clambered back into the one that had been stalled. No one helped another up.

The road turned inland now and began rising toward the ridge bounding the valley, intervening between the valley and Wenshan. The track became stonier, less slippery but so rough that they let me use my motor again. In Yunnan mountains bare pink ledges of rock and brown boulders make a road. Towed without power the jeep would have snapped their fiber rope when it struck a ledge. Our pace fell to about ten miles an hour.

So it was dusk when we reached the crest of the barrier ridge. The ravine ahead and below was already dark. Beyond it, Wenshan tilted vast and black against a gray sky bleared with cloud, and now and then coughs of rifle fire from its slope mixed with the monotony of rain around us.

The road turned now to slant down a narrow ledge cut in the hillside. At the bottom of the ravine there was another halt. The lieutenant came forward from the rear truck and called Bloch back from that in front. They talked a moment. Then my tow rope was cast off; lights—feeble lights—of the truck ahead glowed on, and Bloch beckoned me to follow it with him on foot.

"You must see the bridge you have to cross," he explained. "There is

no parapet. They know you cannot escape now."

I knew the bridge perfectly well and many like it in Yunnan: a single arch of stone spanning the lower depths of a cleft between two steep mountain slopes; simply a piece of unfenced road, five yards wide and about thirty long, reaching into and over black air.

The leading truck turned onto it, and the narrow swath of its headlights pried apart the dark to show through the glitter of rain a line of spaced white stones along the center of the bridge's top. Without rails or parapets for the lights to find, Bloch instructed me, one must follow this center line of white stones. I expressed the surprise and anxiety he expected at the strange ways of Yunnan; then went back to the jeep, switched on my own lights, and let the stones guide me across. When the second truck got over too we began a long, crawling pull.

Somewhere far up there in the dark was Wang's fortress, lightly-held "to deceive." The rifle popping had stopped now, and no gleam showed where I looked for the peak to be. But suddenly, higher than I had gauged because one always discounts heights in the dark, an orange glow flared and lit the gray underbellies of rain-cloud. Wang had told me about that signal: a nightly beacon to let him know his token force on Wenshan still held out.

And then above us sentries screamed challenges and the headlights of the lead truck swung off the road. There was a meadow here, I remembered, a shelf on the mountainside, thick with grass where springs welled up, turning the ground soggy, and dotted with a few damp groves of evergreen. It would be the headquarters camp of the Red regiment: the only level place to pick; the only spot hereabouts where a cub plane might land.

The swing of our lights showed a park of about twenty trucks some yards off the road, their wheels hub deep in lush grass. Across the meadow, against the resurgent mountain, small fires flickered, lighting tree branches and their own hanging smoke.

My guard pounded my shoulder, motioning me to park by the truck I followed. As the guard got out I managed to palm the jeep keys into my pocket. Then Bloch and the lieutenant came to take me to the Red colonel. The colonel's name was Tsu, Bloch whispered, and began some pleading advice in hurried French. I interrupted:

"Your plane? It's here somewhere? How's your gas?"

"Used up, almost. The take-off

barricaded at night. No, you must join us."

The lieutenant pushed between Bloch and me. But I reasoned that Bloch wasn't lying now. What he said made too much sense: the flight from Hanoi, the flights since, and the Reds with no gas to refuel him. The plane was out. We stumbled on through the camp.

Soldiers lay and sat, miserable and silent in the drizzle, around meager fires that hissed. In the shadows it was impossible not to step on some of their bodies but they only whined a little. Their faces were not tight yet with the real famine look, but the flesh had begun to hang in the hollows of skulls. These men were animal-hungry. Food would soon be a killing matter with them.

We came to a pair of tents, the only tents, both orange from lamplight within. Through the open flap of one I saw a small radio and I stopped to look closer until the lieutenant shoved me along.

"Receiving only," Bloch managed to whisper.

The lieutenant jerked aside the flap of the second tent, shouted something about the *maeguan sa-sha* and pushed us in before him so that Bloch stumbled on the uneven matting which covered the muddy hollows of the floor. In lantern light, on a cleaner strip of mat across the back of the tent, sat a Chinese in khaki with the Russian sort of shoulder-boards. His pate was shaved smooth but his face had the wrinkles and color of a dried walnut. Another Chinese rose quickly in the shadows behind him and gave out a sudden English sentence without inflection:

"Colonel Tsu will like *Ameguan* Major return at once to jeepu and make signal to Hanoi for air-drop of food this place early in morning."

"Regret to say," I told him politely "that the air-drop is only for General Wang Cheung Tsung, not for his enemies." It wouldn't do to seem to give in at once. I had to have a stance from which to bargain.

Without bothering—probably without daring—to translate this, the interpreter chattered on. "General Wang is shut up in his fortress above here. Tomorrow maybe we take it. You make signal to Hanoi now."

"Regret to say," I told him again, "the hour for signalling does not come until tomorrow." And to test their trust in Bloch, I added, "Surely the French captain has already informed you of my signal arrangements?" I hadn't told Bloch a thing about radio hours, but it might help to string along if they thought he was holding out on them.

The next few moments told me

definitely just how far they trusted Bloch; how good my word would be against his. Colonel Tsu's walnut bed jerked a nod toward the entrance of the tent. The lieutenant and the interpreter took Bloch's arms.

"Yes, yes, there are hours," Bloch jittered to Tsu, "but he never told me what are the hours." And he begged me. "You remember, my Commandant, I asked you the hours when we first met by the mill but you put me off."

The walnut's eyes fixed on mine. I smiled and shrugged a little. The lieutenant and the *fahnegwan* began to drag Bloch out.

"No more of it. No more," he whined. They must have handled him pretty cruelly once before for he risked a lie now to save himself more of the same. "Yes, the Commandant told me—"

I was going to get any confirmation I wanted now from Bloch. I calculated my time factors quickly. Wang must have time to arm and organize the move. And it would be safest to make these people think I could have had no chance nor reason to have sent a message already.

"Wait, please," I asked Tsu, and turned to Bloch. "Perhaps you did not listen well, so full of your own cleverness in deceiving me at the mill, but did I not say my hour for signalling was from 1500 to 1600 each day?" I'd been on the road to Wenshan, in their hands, from three to four that afternoon. And by four tomorrow Wang should be here, opening his attack.

"Yes, yes. That was it, I recall," Bloch confirmed desperately. They let go his arms.

Tsu and his *fahnegwan* whispered together a little; then the interpreter spoke to me again.

"Colonel Tsu say it will be this way. Tomorrow at proper time in afternoon you make signal. But if the planes do not come next day as we require, you become most unfortunate person. Good or not good?"

I shrugged again. "Very well. If there is no other way. Tomorrow I will call the drop for Colonel Tsu."

THINGS became more comfortable then. Two wet, miserable soldiers brought in a brazier of red charcoal, another brought tea. The Chinese officers made claps of their hands over the brazier and blew and sucked their tea. The lieutenant gained merit with his colonel by offering him one of my ration packets, which Tsu ate eagerly, doling out bits to the *fahnegwan*.

It seemed a good time to assert and establish my own value. I asked the *fahnegwan* that Tsu make the lieutenant give my watch back so I could

assure myself of the true hour for signalling. Talk between the Chinese turned sharp and angry again, then the lieutenant sullenly handed Tsu my pistol, watch, and fountain pen. Tsu let me have the watch.

Then Bloch and the lieutenant were sent out of the tent, but I was allowed to stay. Tsu, his interpreter, and I hunched closer around the brazier. I seemed to be doing all right now. If only the rain would let up by morning and the ceiling lift so that the planes could get into the valley of Htai and find the field by the mill. If my message had been received. . . .

The Chinese talk went on and on in a dialect of which I could only understand a little. Finally the *fahnegwan* rinsed the last of his tea through teeth and addressed me.

"Colonel Tsu have understand air-drop will contain both food and bullets. He will like to know—from you—how tell one from other. He wish his men to know."

To gain time I made him repeat the question. Should I try to mix them up? But Bloch had probably told them about the chute colors. This time I'd better tell the same story—more convincing. When there is no time to make a well-considered lie, Wang always said, then use the truth: you leave no loose ends to trip you later.

"Yellow chute, food. Red chute, bullets," I verified. Then, to be sure it was clear, I made my handkerchief like a chute, let it float to the damp matting, and tried my Yunnan speech on Tsu. "*Hwang-lai. Hung-ammo.*"

They both nodded. That seemed to round plans off for them. At once another Red officer, apparently Tsu's second-in-command, was brought in and instructed lengthily. When he went out again I heard him haranguing some waiting group, stressing the color that meant food. And very soon all over the camp there was chatter. Chinese troops take little heart from general rumors and hopes, but put one specific detail—like chute colors—to the rumor and it becomes true news. Some time in the second morning they believed they would eat full again.

"Now," the *fahnegwan* remarked comfortably, "Colonel Tsu will like to sleep."

From under the brazier they pulled a couple of extra mats rolled there to dry and warm. These they spread for themselves close to the heat. The brazier became a two-sided affair now: I'd had my share of luxury for the night. I found the driest place I could and a rather foul quilt to pull over me. My wrist watch said ten o'clock. I wound it and settled down, head on arm. In the lantern light I thoughtfully watched small drops of mud ooz-

ing up through the weave of the matting near my face. Tsu and the *fahnegwan* snored sturdily, and the acid mildewed air in the tent smelled steadily worse.

Lying with one arm across my eyes to shade the lantern light, I tried to figure some sort of getaway, telling myself severely that it was only hunger—Tsu's tea had simply washed a large hollow inside me—and the stink in the tent that accounted for the hopeless feeling in my stomach. Rescue by Wang when he got his ammo had been easy to imagine in daylight, but now I thought that the moment Wang attacked, Tsu would have me killed just as a routine public service to the People's cause. I should try somehow to escape before that.

In the old days in Wang's garden, when T'ienli still had interludes of childhood, she would tell me Chinese stories sometimes: stories in precise English words that were like small new leaves on a delicate vine of sound. One tale was of the tiger that crawled under the tent and seized the robber chief while the hero escaped in the clamor and the growls. Suppose, lacking a tiger, I could crawl out under this tent without waking Tsu or the *fahnegwan*? But Chinese commanders always kept a bodyguard thick around them—else Tsu wouldn't be snoring in my reach now. Even if his guards drowsed outside and I did clear them, I'd still have to stick to the picketed road down the mountain. Otherwise, in the dark, I'd fall crashing through treetops. The sides of Wenshan are almost vertical. Besides, I wanted this camp to be sleeping sound toward dawn, not searching for a fugitive if the planes really came over Htai.

If the planes came. That would depend a lot on the weather. I'd forgotten to listen to the weather. Tense, I listened now, and the cold spot in my stomach warmed a bit. There was no steady drum-rattle of rain on the canvas any more; only a flurry of drops when wind, in breaths instead of gusts, went through the trees above. Very quietly, I rolled over and lifted the lower edge of the canvas wall beside me. As the lantern light leaked under, some guard outside hissed like a cat and I dropped the flap again.

But I could sleep a little now, for, in the moment the canvas was raised, I'd seen a star pricking through the branches of the pines. The planes could give Wang his drop all right. And maybe in the morning I'd see my own way clear too. I wished, though, I'd been able to wait for the OK from Hanoi. . . .

What awakened me suddenly was tumult outside.

Our tent was still thick with sooty lantern light and I looked at my

watch: 5:10. It couldn't be the planes. They weren't due until after daylight. And the excitement was all coming from the radio tent next door.

Tsu was sitting up now in his quilts, scrubbing night sweat from his crinkled eyes with the khaki sleeve of his jacket. A soldier ran in, shrilling at him, and he flung the quilts away and began kicking the *fahnegwan* awake. I was on my feet before they got to me, and the interpreter began shrieking in my face:

"Colonel Tsu receive message *Ame-gwan* planes preparing fly from Hanoi. Plane men speak of dropping over field by mill on shore of Hutai lake."

Well, there was Hanoi's OK—through some Red spy.

I paid no attention to the *fahnegwan*. It was Tsu I watched. I'd been a fool to take for granted that receiving set worked only with his boss up at Kunming. He got intelligence from the south, too; something for Delaney to clean up—if I ever could tell Delaney.

Tsu was too busy to deal with me at the moment, summoning and ordering. Officers were coming in. Most of their chopped Shansi dialect went by me, but I caught the plan: strengthen the siege lines—Wang will try to break out of Wenshan now in the dark—send four trucks of soldiers and four empties to Hutai—seize the air-drop and bring it back—or defend it and destroy the ammo if Wang did break through from Wenshan here—red chutes, ammo, yellow chutes, food.

Soldiers thrust Bloch into the tent now, and seized me too, screeching at us. Bloch didn't look at me. He was shivering. He'd heard the news.

The officers ran out to their tasks, one by one. I heard motors starting in the truck park by the road, revving up. Headlight beams flashed against our canvas walls. Then Tsu turned to Bloch and me.

The *fahnegwan* and our guards fell silent. Tsu said nothing. The wrinkles on the brown shell of his face creased deeper to let his teeth show. Then he made a quick, severing motion with his hand, and the guards began to pull Bloch and me out. The *fahnegwan* reached over to jerk the watch from my wrist, breaking the strap.

Bloch sagged to his knees on the dirty mats, his full weight, almost dragging down the soldier who pulled at him. Abjectly, he pleaded to Tsu. I'd deceived him, too, he sobbed. I was the one to be killed. They would need him. He could still help them.

Tsu paid no attention. The soldiers got us outside.

The quiet pelt of rain was over. Fires blazed up, and the whole mountain meadow camp was torch-lit by

running men. In the truck park, over near the road, motors roared in short, screeching bursts but the headlights didn't move.

As the soldiers were thrusting us along toward a darker place the lieutenant ran by, shouting for Tsu who came quickly out of the tent. Our guards stopped to listen: Chinese curiosity always conquers discipline.

I kicked Bloch out of his daze. "The trucks are bogged? Is that what it is?"

"Yes," he whispered dully. "Yes." Of course! The rain on spots already softened by mountain springs.

I was going to be killed off now, but this could be the delay Wang needed until he got his drop. My mind began to function again through its stifle of fear. But the delay wasn't sure yet; it might not be long enough, either. Cut branches shored under the wheels, a lot of manpower to push, and the promise of food to craze them into strength. But if I could somehow get to warn Wang, I thought I saw a way for him to deal with this new patrol when it reached Hutai. And with Bloch's plane grounded, my jeep was the only means left to carry the warning.

Tsu and his staff started for the park. I kicked Bloch to life again. "Shout. Tell Tsu we'll pull his trucks out with the jeep."

Sensing reprieve, Bloch obeyed.

Tsu heard, stopped, spat a question to his motor lieutenant. The lieutenant

bobbed his head, chattered something about the job on the way from Hutai. Then Tsu beckoned our guard to bring us along and began hurrying again for the truck park. The soldiers hustled us after him.

Inside the park, in the trampled mushy grass, dozens of men struggled with the first truck, but it only rocked obstinately and flung them about. When we came into the torchlight, these men drew back and let me get into my jeep to start the engine.

The jeep was mired too. I beckoned Bloch up to hear a hand and some of the Chinese to push also. While they were setting themselves I spoke low to Bloch in French. "If you don't want to die slow, stand by and keep putting your shoulder to the dashboard on the off side."

I had them rock the jeep back and forth now as I shifted gears between forward and reverse, Bloch relaying my commands. It gave him a reason for being there, because Tsu was watching.

The jeep should come out on the next forward thrust. I waved the stockade of soldiers back and they gave way a little, but Tsu came over and saw to it they were still packed solid across the road downhill. Uphill, of course, there'd be road blocks between us and Wenshan fort.

The jeep plunged out on the hard road. The barrier of men stood fast in front of me, just looking on dully, without imagination. Tsu did their



thinking for them. They stood too thick to penetrate. I had to stop.

At once the lieutenant ran out with some of his men. They fastened a tow rope from the first truck to the jeep's rear end. The lieutenant seemed to be putting a couple of men behind me for make-weight but I wouldn't have that. The heavy radio, my knobbed tires, and the jeep's four-wheel drive gave all the traction I needed on the drained road.

Bloch and a few men came up to push again; others got around the truck. I eased slowly ahead bringing the tow line taut, feeling out the weight of the truck behind. Its engine was running too. Slowly, with the soldiers screaming and heaving, it began to move. Its wheels churned, then caught. I didn't dare stall around with Tsu watching. And the mob of soldiers was still dense across the road ahead. I'd have to get the truck out. Finally I did.

The moment the truck was out the lieutenant cast off the tow rope, and, at Tsu's shouted orders the truck ran past me. The barrier of soldiers parted. The truck took their place, blocking the narrow road ahead of me.

Tsu was too smart for me. He knew it, too, with his crinkled, sardonic grin. Now he sent most of the soldiers off about their business—strengthening his lines, probably, against the breakthrough he expected from Wang in Wenshan. Then he

gestured the lieutenant to take over and walked away. Leisurely, the lieutenant roped my jeep to the next truck.

I was getting desperate now. Everything was going the wrong way. One free truck could probably pull out another, and certainly two free ones could. There was nothing I could do about it—even if I dragged the next truck across the road and over the edge of the mountain.

Then, as I backed up to give the lieutenant slack, my headlights, searching down the road past the truck that blocked me, showed something I liked. The blocking truck hadn't left me enough distance anyway, but about ten yards ahead of it was a long outcropping lengthways hump of rock, a series of rounded boulders that edged the outside of the road and overhung the slope. If I could ride my outer wheels up on that outcrop I could get past the truck ahead of me—maybe.

I called Bloch up again. "They haven't left me enough distance," I told him loudly in his own language. "Have that truck ahead move forward about its own length."

There was only the driver in the truck. Bloch chattered to the lieutenant, the lieutenant screamed to the driver, and apathetically the driver moved a few yards down the road. "A bit more," I told Bloch. "Good." Then I whispered. "Now keep close and be ready to jump in."

To give Bloch—and his helpers—a reason for putting their shoulders to the jeep, I took up gradually on the slack of the tow rope and gave the second truck a preliminary pull. It wasn't stuck as badly as the first had been and I dragged it a bit farther than I meant to do—almost, onto the road. I slacked back for the final pull. The lieutenant was watching the truck. I even dared to back a little. I signed Bloch and his gang to put their shoulders to it. He understood and leaned into the jeep, against the dashboard on the side away from the wheel, gripping the bars of the flat windshield. "Heave" I called, and gave the jeep the gun.

Bloch fell across the floor boards. The others flicked off, clawing at the sides. The lieutenant screamed. The tow rope parted with a twang, snapping back at the bumpers behind. The jeep, freed, sprang forward.

A rifle fired. In my headlights I saw the driver of the blocking truck jump out on the hillside. I swung my wheel at the slanting stone hedging the outer rim of the road. The wheel wrenched; a smashing jolt, terrible for that wired tie rod. The jeep tipped up, scraping against the truck side and Bloch's head cannoned into my knees. Then the outer wheels crashed down on the road again; shots pelted into the truck behind, and we lurched around the first of the downhill turns.

As we bucketed and caromed down, Bloch scrambled into the seat beside me. "Slower," he begged. "They must use the first truck to pull out the second before pursuit. To send convoy for air-drop is more important to them than we are."

"Don't fool yourself," I gasped. "That second truck's near enough to the road to be manhandled out. They'll chase us with the first truck as soon as they can man it."

I was right. A beam of light swung down around the curve behind us and there was a belch of wild shots.

"We'll be OK to the bridge—lot of curves here—" the words were jolted out of me—"but up the next slope—straight and open—they can keep shooting at our lights—" I couldn't drive blind on Yunnan roads—"We'll have to fix the bridge."

The truck lights caught us again briefly. More shots came. Then we lurched around another curve into brief shelter and dark.

"How fix the bridge?" Bloch panted. "The marking stones, man. It's pitch dark yet."

But I think he was still too dazed to understand.

All down that pitching, jolting descent I speeded as much as the bouldered road and my makeshift



"Guy next door— Says he doesn't mind the horrible program but will I turn down the volume. He thinks you're a radio!"

steering gear allowed, breathless and fearful after each bump. But we weren't gaining. The Chinese driver was reckless but when their lights caught us his crew couldn't aim.

Then we came to the turn at the bridge without a parapet. I had to slow down to follow the white marking stones along the center. Slowly, in my lights, the jeep's hood ate up the line of white stones between its wheels, and Bloch, glancing back, whined now that the truck gained on us.

Once on the far side, though, I stopped, switched off my lights, and jumped out. "Come on, come on," I told Bloch. The lights of the truck across the ravine were already coming down the last grade before the bridge turn. After that they would be on the bridge itself.

I hurried back to the bridge, almost feeling my way. Bloch was stumbling along beside me. "You will throw the white stones over the edge?"

"Not time. Slant them to the edge. Use your feet. Hurry."

Sweating and grovelling, we did it. The white stones weren't too hard to see, even in pitch dark. Then, just as the lights of the truck swung onto the bridge, we got back across it to the jeep, and to the cover of the trees that screened the beginning of the ascent over the last ridge between us and Hutai valley. Then we turned to watch.

On the level surface of the bridge the truck speeded up. Then the beam of its lights angled out of our eyes. Suddenly, above the beat of its motor came yells; yells rising to a combined, desperate scream, as the headlight beam dipped down like a waved flashlight. From the ravine came a splintering blow; a burst of blue flame. Scream and flame blotted out together. In a moment only minor wailings rose from the blackness below the bridge.

But, as we started the jeep again, we saw, high up on Wenshan behind, the strung-out lights of seven other trucks wavering down the long descent.

DAWN came as we topped the ridge that bounded the valley of Wang's lake. This morning no mist lay over Hutai. The sky dome was the smooth color of wet concrete that begins to dry in patches of cold gray. Behind us now pines on the crest of Wenshan became black ideographs on luminous parchment. A wet smell of leaf mold and resin from the mountain forests flowed along with us down into the valley.

On the smoother road along the lake I risked more speed. The convoy was not in sight but Wang needed all the time I could gain for him if he

were to take the plan I hoped he'd take when he knew the convoy was coming. He had to be warned of the convoy. The drop wasn't due for an hour or more—I missed my wrist watch—but by then the Red trucks would be on the field. And when the drop came Wang wouldn't sit by and see them seize it. He'd come out fighting. But crossing the narrow causeway his longswordmen, without ammo, would be shot down as they crossed, even by a few truck loads of Tsu's soldiers—just slaughter.

I DROVE hard along the lake shore. Wang's watchers should be sighting me now, even in the half-light. As we swung into the belt of woods east of the landing field, I glanced at Bloch, slumped down silent beside me. He probably thought we were making for the Indo-China border and on south to Hanoi. That would be suicide, trying to jeep through the country of the Viet Minh guerrillas. He should realize that. Maybe he did. Maybe that was why I could see the skull under his round incongruous white face.

We ran out of the woods onto the landing-field and I swung toward the causeway. Wang had seen me: men were throwing planks for me this time over the bamboos of the causeway ditch. That would be T'ienli's care.

Bloch clawed at my arm. "Not there. Who are those? Keep west to Linan, then south."

"Shut up," I told him. I didn't care whether he understood or not. "My show now." But I supposed I'd have to save his neck again later with Wang. I wondered why I bothered.

We raced across the causeway, through the causeway gate, past Wang's burnt compound, and into the Temple court. Wang was waiting there, T'ienli with him.

I left Bloch in the jeep near the Temple gate and walked toward them, suddenly elated to be here making my bows again. To Americans I'd probably have swaggered a little, but to T'ienli I could only smile. "You see, all was well."

She smiled back quickly; then she wouldn't look up any more as she answered. "We feared for you, Wei-erh."

Soberly I turned to Wang and duty. "Now, sir, we've got to move fast—" but he was looking beyond my shoulder. I turned. It was Bloch he regarded, Bloch crouching in the jeep still, but with the tall swordsman standing over him.

"He's harmless now," I said, "and we've no time—"

But Wang raised a clenched hand. "Unpleasant is the presence of one who walks with the cat by day and the tiger by night." The swordsman

plucked Bloch from the jeep. Bloch tried to speak but the swordsman's enormous hand covered his mouth; only his pale, staring eyes besought as he was dragged through the door in the Temple gate that led to the passages below.

Well, let them lock him up a while. Quickly I told Wang how the Reds got word of the drop and of Tsu's men and trucks coming behind me. Neither he nor T'ienli interrupted. "Get your men across the causeway, sir, now, before they come," I ended. "Use the woods on the slope above the mill for ambush. They still don't know you're here. And they're mad-hungry. They won't be looking for anything but the food in the drop. Then, while they're busy looting the yellow chutes—"

T'ienli was nodding, but old Stone-eyes only looked through me; always the producer who had to visualize in his own mind any new scene some actor of his might suggest. Desperately, with moments passing, I turned to T'ienli. She seemed withdrawn, as always when men's decisions were being made. Now, as though I had called aloud to her, she raised her head, and her eyes said "wait." Then suddenly, while her eyes still counselled me, Wang began to scream commands. The quiet garden became turmoil.

Through doors along the penthouse walls, men spouted up from the passages below; white-faced men in brown rags with rifles slung and banging emptily behind their bony shoulders, but with the old longswords in their hands.

CAPTAINS ran to Wang for a few sharp sentences; then raced for the Temple gate, their men streaming after them. Last of all, T'ienli got her orders, Wang jabbing a pointed brown finger first up at the roof pagoda above the Temple, next at the yellow girlie around her slim waist. Then he called me.

"Come and drive jeepu. We inspect preparation."

The court was empty now. As we climbed into the jeep, T'ienli came close beside me.

"I say it while I may, Wei-erh. Remember always I am glad it was you who came back to help us."

As we left the Temple the last string of running men passed through the causeway gate.

It was full light now, gray, chill, windless. Anxiously, I looked over my shoulder to the south. I had allowed the planes two hours from daybreak to be sure the usual morning mist would clear. I hoped I had not allowed too much time.

We ran under the causeway gate. A watcher on the platform above

shrieked something. I glanced at Wang.

"Lorries approach once more, Wei-erh."

From the causeway we saw the last of Wang's men racing across the landing-field toward the jungly slope behind the mill. We overtook them, swerving from one group to another, herding and hurrying them into the woods.

The landing-field was vacant now. We turned back toward the causeway, my eyes fanning the southern sky, back and forth, searching for the planes. But that sky was vacant as the field.

Beside me, Wang sucked in his breath.

"Make jeep fly fast, Wei-erh. Lorries are here."

And from our left the Red trucks burst out of the woods.

They saw us.

The lead truck swerved and speeded to cut us off from the causeway. Its striding, jouncing soldiers began shooting crazily. A lot of fiddle strings seemed to snap over our heads.

I saw other trucks pull up at the field's edge; soldiers tumbling out, unslinging rifles, forming up. But the lead truck came on, full of fire-crackers.

"Fast, Wei-erh. We hold at causeway gate."

I couldn't look any more: I had to drive. Wang pulled my carbine off the dashboard. His shots, one by one, slammed in my ears. The fiddle-strings kept snapping too. We hit a bounce just as Wang fired again. Then he laid the carbine in his lap and began to laugh. Wang only laughed at the major sort of practical joke. The fiddle-strings had stopped snapping.

I shouted, "Did you get the engine or the driver?"

"Both," he said proudly. "It wreck."

FINALLY we were on the causeway, and then the gates under the causeway tower swung closed behind us. I jerked the jeep to a stop, grabbed a new bandolier for the carbine, and we ran up to the platform over the gate.

The truck Wang had hit stood stranded on the field. The soldiers were out of it, some already edging gingerly onto the causeway. The lieutenant was shrieling them along. The men from the other trucks still milled around on the east side of the field, rifles and burp-guns ready in their hands. But no sound nor sight of planes.

Wang let me have the carbine to reload. He'd made his bull's eye. *Gambai*, Wang.

"Go back to the Temple," I urged. He ought to be in the roof-pagoda to direct the show. He shook his head.

For a moment those oiled stone eyes of his looked almost affectionate.

"This time," he said gravely, "I stand with you. Signal will be made at proper time after planes come." And he looked anxiously at the sky.

"See anything, sir?"

"Not yet, Wei-erh."

Bullets began to spat against the wall below us, to plug into the wooden gate and play grasshopper and shrill locust over the platform where we crouched. The two watchmen with their longwords had sensibly gone down to wait until the gate was battered through. At the far end of the causeway the lieutenant seemed to be readying some sort of a rush. I lay flat and got him in my sights.

Wang let me fire—I hit the lieutenant—then touched my shoulder. "Listen, please."

The shooting had paused when the lieutenant went down. And distantly, through the sudden silence, I heard the thrum of planes. I rolled over and looked south. Out of a crease of cloud came a V of darker specks.

The watchers below shouted. On the field and along the edges of the causeway Tsu's soldiers were screaming and pointing. Now the planes were distinct and lowering over the lake. The lead plane shot forward and swung off to the east and the others banked, peeled off from the V, and tailed behind it in a long column, circling for the drop.

From the bellies of the planes dark seeds began to fall; seeds that blossomed and floated down over the dull green field. And I jumped to my feet, shouting to Tsu's hungry soldiers along the causeway, "Food! Yellow is food! *Huang lai! Huang lai!*"

Yellow and crimson poppies began to bloom in the grass of the field. With one accord, shrieking, Tsu's men rushed for the chutes like starved animals when meat is thrown them.

For a moment I watched; then turned to Wang. He was gone. The danger at the gate was over for the moment.

I knew where he had gone and ran after him—down past the swordmen at the gate, past the burnt compound, through the Temple court and the aloof gloom of the Temple itself to the dark stair behind the hangings that led to the roof-pagoda.

T'ienli and Wang were together there, looking off toward the dropping ground, and T'ienli made a place for me beside her. Out on the green field, crimson chutes of ammo spread undisturbed, but around the yellow food chutes Tsu's soldiers writhed like blue maggots, tearing and clawing the packages apart, their rifles flung aside on the grass.

Then Wang bowed to T'ienli. Slowly she unwound the silk of the Man-

chu girdle from her waist and let it float out over the parapet of the cupola.

The dark rim of the woods on the slope behind the mill seemed to detach itself. A brown mass, terrible with silence, poured down, like sand dumped over a hillside, flowing over the field, over the bright chutes and the writhing men. The screaming began then, and the long gray sword blades rose and fell.

WHEN it was over Wang drew in the deep long breath of power, and the Governor of South-of-the-Clouds spoke courteous words.

"We are grateful, Wei-erh. Have we gifts your acceptance would honor?"

T'ienli was beside me. My reply was prompt.

"Two favors, Wang Cheung Tsung. First, that your niece shall be sent once more to the safe care of convent Sisters, this time flying south to Hanoi. And one smaller thing: that you give me the Captain Bloch to return to Hanoi for judgment by his own people."

Wang stared at me a moment. Then, as a perplexed father relegates some willful child to its nurse, he motioned T'ienli to answer me.

She was gentle. "Wei-erh, you do not understand. A weak and evil man like the French captain will sin as long as he lives, and for each sin he must pay horribly in some later life. Surely it is merciful to end his sinning quickly."

I looked at Wang. His eyes were opaque, his hands clasped in ease and serenity, not tightly in anger, nor loosely in reluctance. And I knew it was useless to ask again.

"Let it be quick then, not slow," I muttered.

"It was quick," said Wang brusquely, and turned again to contemplate his men out on the field, arming themselves now from the crimson chutes for the greater killing that would be at Wenshan today.

T'ienli took me aside a little, and her voice was very gentle now.

"When your country and your people are older, Wei-erh, you will more understand these things. But because you do not understand yet—that is why I shall not come where you will be—why I must stay here with my own people, South-of-the-Clouds. Only my prayers may travel with you."

Once more I tried, for she was content bred.

"But we address all our prayers alike."

"No, Wei-erh. My people have their own lady of sorrows—Kwan Yin."

She would not let me see her face.

T'ienli: Eternal Wisdom. •

RELAX and ENJOY



MOVIES ⇨

Adventure: *His Majesty O'Keefe* (Warners). Filmed on location in the Fiji Islands and starring Burt Lancaster as the Yankee sea captain who is tossed overboard by a mutinous crew, this swash-buckler is filled with high adventure and Burt Lancaster is at his best in the type of rôle that brought him fame. Turning disaster into opportunity, Lancaster sees a chance to make a fortune in the island's copra business and becomes His Majesty O'Keefe after overcoming all available competition by winning a place among the islanders and a beautiful Polynesian as his queen.

CinemaScope: *Beneath the 12-Mile Reef* (20th-Fox). If you haven't already seen this beautifully-filmed story of adventure off the Florida coast, by all means don't miss it. Typical scenes of underwater dangers to the sponge-divers suddenly become spine-chilling on the wide screen, and the battle between a man and an octopus is downright horrifying.

Cavalry: *War Arrow* (Universal). Passable but nothing extraordinary is this cavalry-versus-Indians action yarn starring Jeff Chandler and Maureen O'Hara and filmed in Technicolor. Chandler is an Army major on special assignment in Texas who uses one group of Indians to quell another and wins lovely Maureen O'Hara in the process.



TELEVISION ⇨

Dramatic: After more than four years of watchful waiting, United States Steel has finally gone into television. The result is even better than had been anticipated. *The U. S. Steel Hour* is adult, intelligent, thought-provoking drama at the best level seen so far on TV. A worthy partner to *Theater Guild on the*

Air, Big Steel's similar radio program, The U. S. Steel Hour presents original dramatic scripts rather than adaptations of established Broadway successes. The wisdom of Big Steel's long-delayed entry into the sight-and-sound medium is immediately apparent in the beautifully polished production of these scripts. Steel has learned from the mistakes of others and is reaping full benefit from that knowledge. In spite of what the cynic once said, it does take more than a million dollars to make a successful TV show, and Big Steel has combined good taste with a good bank-roll to come up with something extra-special.



BOOKS ⇨

Crime: *Five Against the House* (Doubleday, \$3.00) by Jack Finney. This is a taut and fast-paced story of raw-nerve suspense, about a crime that wasn't a crime, committed by four young men and a girl who weren't criminals. It started on one of those drizzly, what-to-do college afternoons when the idle talk could

have led to goldfish swallowing or panty raids. Instead it led to deadly serious armed robbery: the dazzling wealth of Harold's Club, the fabulous Reno casino. When one man belatedly wanted out of the deal, the web had grown too strong; the meticulous plan was in motion and it couldn't be stopped. And it went off like clock-work—except for one tiny detail. In a crescendo of tension, this gripping story of five ordinary people caught in a trap spirals to a surprise finish that leaves you limp. A real edge-of-the-chair thriller.

Adventure: *Men and Sharks* (Doubleday, \$3.95), by Hans Hass. Translated from German by Barrows Mussey and illustrated with 32 pages of photographs, this exciting sequel to *Diving for Adventure* deals with an expedition through the waters of the Aegean and the Adriatic for the purpose of filming underwater scenes and to demonstrate the author's thesis that sharks aren't too dangerous to humans. At first the expedition was plagued by bad luck; mechanical troubles, disagreements and red tape conspired to ruin things—but worst of all, there were no fish. It was not until they learned that in the coastal waters of Greece dynamite was used by all successful fishermen, that their luck changed. Dynamite brought sharks by the hundreds to furnish the excitement with which this book is jam-packed; adventures in diving, in taking underwater movies and stills, in encounters with sharks, polyps, and all sorts of underwater monstrosities fill its pages. The style is terse and highly readable and the pictures are strikingly vivid.



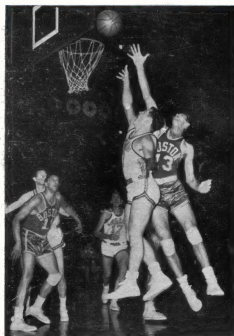
RECORDS ⇨

Columbia has prepared a set of recorded readings of their own works by some of today's most famous writers. The quality of the individual selections varies greatly, as may well be expected, but the anthology as a whole is excellent. Among the authors represented in the collection are John Steinbeck, Dorothy Parker, Ogden Nash, the three Sitwells—and Truman Capote.

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